NEW TIMES

China: the emigré opposition

March 19–25, 1991

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A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

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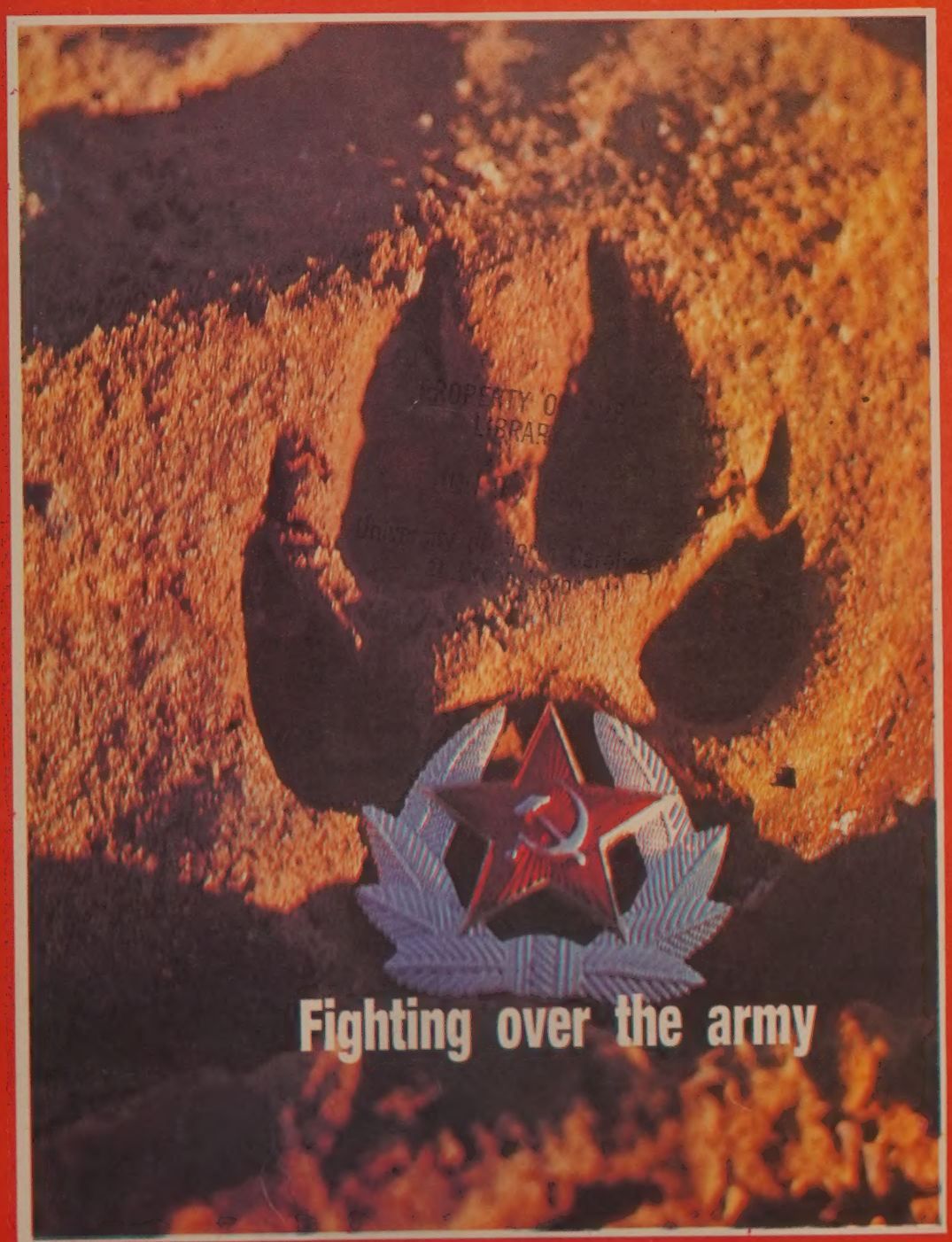

Fighting over the army

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LEONID TISHKOV

A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

NEW TIMES

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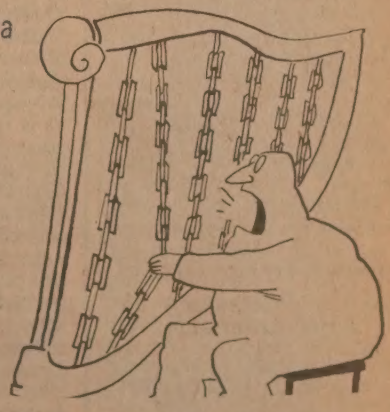

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From our mailbag

■ According to some press reports, the Latvian Red Riflemen give their full backing to the Riga Riot Police and even consider them to be the successors of their fighting traditions. In reality this is not the case, and I want NT readers to know about it.

E. Feldmanis, Chairman of the Riflemen's Council, stated that any support of bloodshed and violence is out of the question. On the contrary, the riflemen had been shocked by the lawlessness perpetrated by the "law enforcement officers" in Riga. The Lettish Riflemen have called on everyone to be sensible and to renounce violence as a means of achieving political goals.

Ivars Branionis
Riga, Latvia, USSR

■ I read in the newspaper *Sovietskaya Moldova* an interview with the chairman of the republican KGB T. Botnaru. The high-ranking official gave a negative answer to questions about a possible total shadowing and telephone bugging. To the question of the correspondent whether he could be confident that his telephone was not bugged his interlocutor answered: "Yes, you can," and added: "If you have doubts, come to see me and I shall tell you again that this is not the case."

I have no reason for doubting T. Botnaru's honesty, but I would like to have more weighty guarantees than his personal assurances. It is necessary to create a legal mechanism that would make it possible for any person who is not on trial or under investigation to find out whether the KGB has a file on him, whether he is being shadowed or his phone is bugged. In the United States, for example, there is a law on the freedom of information that allows each citizen to look at his file if there is one. It is time we too adopt corresponding laws that would make life easier for the leaders of the said agency by freeing them from the need to give personal explanations to all their countrymen.

M. Rozanov
Kishinev, Moldova, USSR

■ The next day after the President's decree on the replacement of bank notes, I arrived in Moscow and went to the Arbat to offer my services in the exchange of money. I offered to exchange money with the help of the cash in the coffer of my sovkhoz. My customers wanted to exchange their money right away, but many of them, after all, wrote down the

Do democrats threaten democracy?

■ Our young and totally inexperienced democracy faces many dangers. The most terrible of them come, of course, from the extreme right. But in the final analysis, to deal with conservatives is more simple — they remain in the public eye and state their position openly. But what is one to do when a man calling himself a democrat holds anti-democratic positions? There are more such situations than one can shake a stick at. The habitual paternalistic consciousness of a Soviet cannot at once obliterate the distinction between "higher" power and the "faceless" crowd. It seems to us quite natural to see in the state institutions our Saviours of sorts. When we take a closer look at the concrete bearers of power we realize their patent inferiority, but Power for us is infallible.

Issue No. 7/91 (The Minsitry of Communication is to blame for my belated response) featured an article by Vladimir Smolko called "Pragmatic approach to ideological conservatism" on the problems of China. He is correct to point out that the methods of implementation of the demographic process that are being used in the People's Republic of China are at odds with the axiom of humane civilization — the inalienability of rights of an individual. But this is not the purpose for which the article was written! The author writes about "quasi-democrats" and "human rights champions in the West" whose fault is that they like to talk about the violations of human rights in China without taking the trouble to examine the specific features of the socio-economic and political situation." Vladimir Smolko does take the trouble to make such an analysis. Hence he knows that the democratic policy in the People's Republic of China is implemented both with the help of tax levers and "administrative and political sanctions (including expulsion from the party)." He knows this all right, but considers it a "forced measure." In his view, at the top they know better what people at the grass roots level want and drive their own people towards happiness with an iron hand. The totalitarian thinking immediately turns to the "prison camp" method of administrative bans.

And our democrat, alas, gives it his backing.

Moreover, he actually supports the assertion that China is not matured yet for democracy which requires a certain level of political and moral standards, therefore the liberalization of the political system should not be in the today's agenda. People must be educated (maybe it would be more accurate to say — subject to education?) One can discern here a fraction of truth. But again one asks himself a question: Is education a natural process of the development of society or a "test-tube" process controlled by the authoritarian regime in power? The masses in the latter variant are regarded as silly little chaps, as an obedient herd ignorant of how to pass through the new gate of democracy.

Your author without condemnation retells the theses of the Chinese propaganda that attempts to secure the "correct" understanding of freedom. This is, perhaps, what it is all about. The herdsmen will make a list of the criteria of "correct" democracy and will lead the obedient herd down this road. He who will step to the side will be shot.

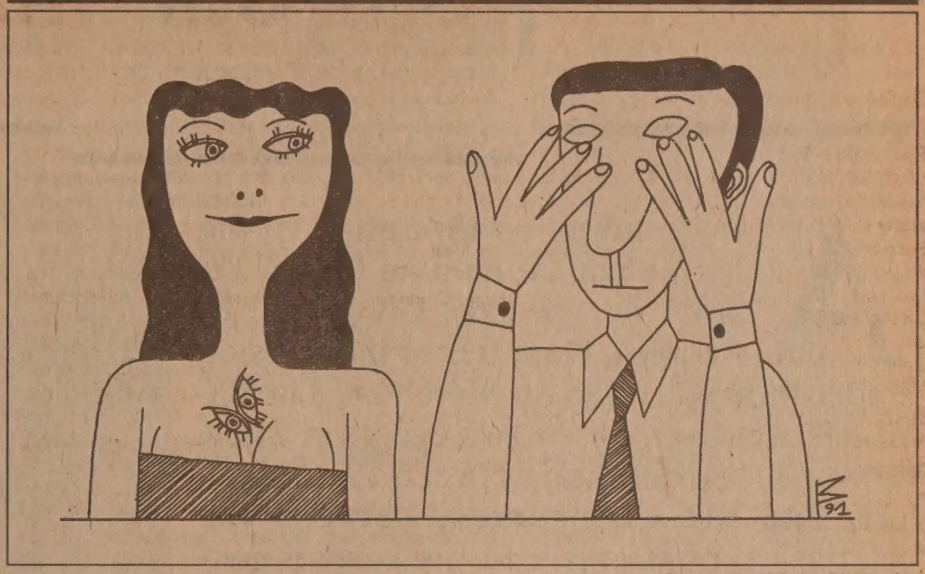
Tiananmen Square, Tbilisi, Baku, Vilnius (and before that — Budapest, Prague) are the landmarks of their "democracy."

Sergei Toroptsev
Moscow, USSR

The Latvian Red Riflemen speak against the riot police

How to make life easier for leaders of the KGB

"I wanted to give the mafia a hand, but someone did it for me."



Drawing by Valentin Mokievsky

Moscow phone number of my brother.

On the Arbat people wanted to exchange from one thousand to two thousand rubles with occasional offers reaching three to five thousand rubles. Then I went to the Ryzhski market where the stir was much greater and I received a lot of offers that topped my estimated capacity several times over. By the evening a one hundred bill was worth at the market 40 and even 35 rubles (they say that later on prices fell still further). But here too, people were taking interest in my offers only in perspective, although my exchange rate was higher than the one on the "market." Nevertheless they took down my telephone number and my address grieving that, evidently, one of these days they would have, after all, to take advantage of my services.

During the entire next day I eagerly awaited visitors with bundles of money. In the evening I lost all patience and called up my brother in Moscow. It turned out that the situation in Moscow had changed: evidently, the main contingent of the underground millionaires had found ways of exchanging their money reserves: a hundred ruble bill was being exchanged for no less than 75–80 rubles. None of my potential customers phoned my brother. Thus, my attempt to grow rich "in an honest way" by offering my services to the mafia has yielded no results. So, who has helped the mafia?

Alexei Sychev
Kaluga Region, USSR

The USSR as a neutral state?

■ Recently, the Soviet Union declared its adherence to new political thinking and swore allegiance to the thesis of the interdependence of the world. But our foreign policy has been perceiving too literally its imaginary obligations before the world community and this has hampered practical manoeuvre towards national interests, whereas Western diplomacy has always had sufficient freedom while making its choice.

While realizing the concept of national renewal, we must formulate in a sensible way our own foreign policy interests proceeding from the means at our disposal. This will make it possible for us to proceed in new fashion in order to depart at last from the boggy, engulfing atmosphere of the negotiating processes that sometimes resemble a game of "give-away."

The political, economic and military appearance of the Soviet Union brought in accordance with world standards to a moderate condition will signal to Western partners the absence of a threat from our side. And then one can expect the introduction of serious amendments in their military and foreign policy programmes. But this is not to imply that Soviet foreign policy and the methods of its implementation do not meet today international standards. It would be more correct to say that Soviet leadership has made an attempt to make international relations more democratic and lay in their foundation the principle of morals. However, the West proved unprepared for so drastic a change in the list of foreign politicy priorities. But the situation "we and they" (even in a non-confrontation sense) should be replaced by the condition "we together with all others" – naturally, with the preservation of our identity and the respect of equality, dignity and the principle of reciprocity. By acting along these lines, the Soviet Union could attain the status that calls for a non-participation in military blocs and alliances, non-allocation of its territory for foreign troops and military bases and non-participation in interstate armed conflicts. In principle these conditions are completely in line with the status of a neutral state. I think they could be included in the new Constitution and the Union Treaty.

The new appearance of the USSR is especially needed now that the Warsaw bloc is leaving the political arena as a military organization, the NATO loses its "enemy" and the non-alignment movement will have to change its status too, since there will be no one to be aligned with.

We shall have to take a fresh look at the philosophy of international relations itself which is still based on the contradictions of the triad "West – East – South" as well as that of intergovernmental institutions starting with the UN Security Council.

But the responsibility for the maintenance of peace calls for the participation of all countries – both big and small. So, the Soviet Union will not be in a position to give up its role of the great power and, for that matter, should it try to?

Yuri Lunkov
Cand.Sc. (History)
Moscow, USSR

■ I have been keeping company of your magazine for eight years now reading it from cover to cover – all its articles are interesting, and I like the *NT*'s artistic design too. The sections Viewpoint and Differing Opinion are my favourite.

This year the magazine's price has gone up significantly, but all the same I have subscribed to it – I don't want to part company with a good friend and comrade. I thank the authors of *NT* and wish you success in your creative work.

Please, publish this letter of mine in your magazine.

Maston Gazalkhonov
Tajikistan, USSR

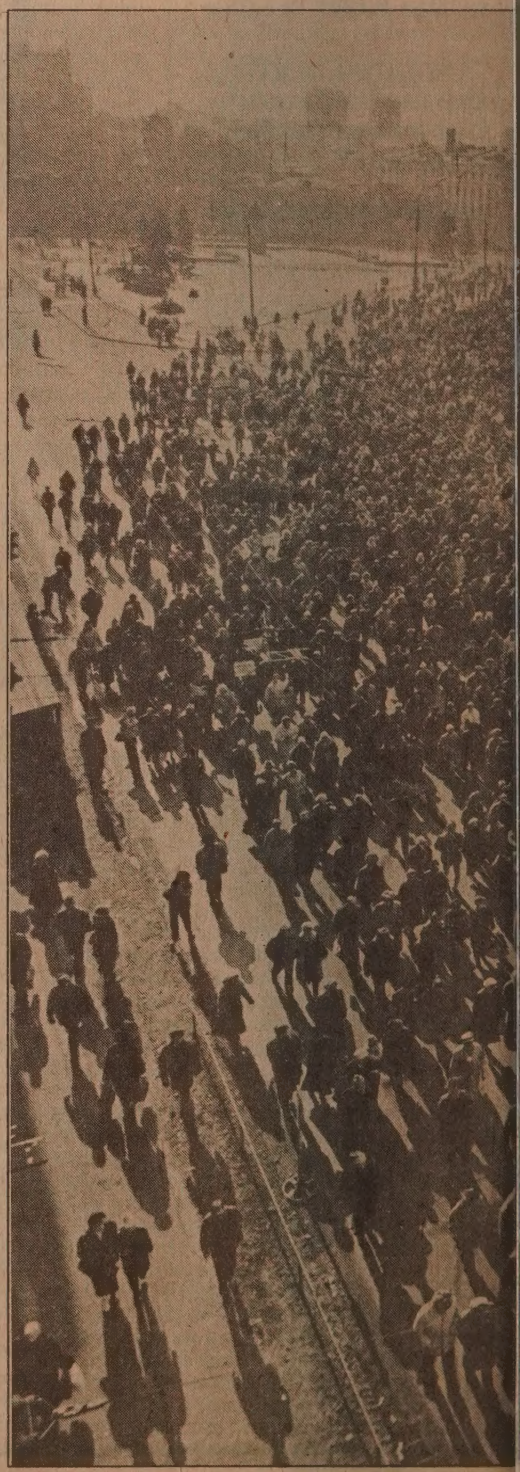
Compiled by Tatiana Chernova

A referendum on the future of the Union will be held on March 17, and a special Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation will open on March 28. The nation is approaching the two events in a new spirit of confrontation between the democrats and the Communists, between the leadership of Russia and the central government.

March 1991:

a month of radical change?

Marina Shakina



The centre of the nation's political life seems to be shifting to Manezhnaya Square in Moscow. Rallies have been held there over the last few weekends. Three rallies took place in the square on February 22, 23 and 24, with the attendance growing from day to day. On March 10 some 800,000 Muscovites again flocked to the centre of the capital to express their support for Boris Yeltsin. In all appearances, the movement of support has not yet reached its highest point

Photo by Dmitry Borko

The main theme of domestic politics today is undoubtedly a referendum on the future of the Union. It overshadows other news and events – an aggravation of the situation in South Ossetia, a spring walkout by miners, and parliamentary debates on the formation of the Soviet Government. Even the thrilling question of compensation for price increases has receded into the background.

Though the events of recent years have taught us to be cautious in our optimism and expectations, it is felt nevertheless that both the leadership and the people are placing great hopes with the referendum. Hopes for a change, a turn for the better, a way out of the political and then the economic crisis.

But as March 17 draws closer, more and more people voice doubts as to whether the referendum will solve any problems at all. Even members of the Soviet Parliament, who are not disposed to be original, fear that the referendum may further aggravate the already tense situation in the country.

Different referendums

Much has been said to the effect that the referendum question is an incorrect, cunning-worded and cumbersome. On March 17 the voters will have to reply to the following: "Do you consider it necessary to preserve the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a renovated federation of equal sovereign republics in which human rights and freedoms will be fully guaranteed for people of any nationality?"

The question, formulted by Soviet parliamentarians, was not examined by experts from the Committee of Constitutional Supervision. However, it is not the duty of the committee to examine whether the formulation is logical. Before approving the referendum question it would have been advisable to consult specialists in logic and the Russian language. Several republics refused to hold the referendum by referring to flaws in its wording, though they might have hidden an ulterior motive.

Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Georgia, Moldova and Armenia refused to hold the referendum for various reasons. Azerbaijan hesitated for a long time, but finally said "yes" to the referendum. However, Kazakhstan virtually refused at the last moment. It revised the wording of the referendum question and, despite a request from the central authorities, did not budge from its position. The people of Kazakhstan will therefore answer a different question. "Do you consider it necessary to preserve the Union as a union of equal sovereign republics?" Several republics have added their own question, close in its meaning, to the Union referendum one, thereby muddling things up for the voters.

The referendum is a costly measure, of course, and the authorities at the every level decided to try to benefit from it as much as possible. Besides, in view of the present apathy of voters it is simply unreal to impel them to go to the polls three or four times a year. But the future of the Union can still interest them.

In the Russian Federation the question of electing president of the republic was added to the Union referendum one. Muscovites will also vote on the question of electing the mayor of the capital by the city residents. On the island of Sakhalin the local population will also vote on the future of the Southern Kurils. Smolensk set an example of regional sovereignty. There and in a number of autonomous entities within the Russian Federation the question of electing president of Russia will not be included in the referendum papers.

Within a number of important questions included in the ballot papers, the voters are likely to be confused, and the possibility of mistakes will increase. Since the wording of the Union referendum question is hard to understand, the psychological fatigue of voters will evidently reach its highest point on the day of the referendum.

In the past voters were irritated by empty talk in parliaments, and now they may become irritated by referendums and the questions posed in them. But so far voters are more or less patient – hoping only the affair proves useful. What results can we expect from the referendum?

Any surprises?

In the opinion of psychologists and sociologists, at least 60 percent of voters who will go to the polls will say "yes" to the Union because, according to research by scholars, people are inclined to answer rather "yes" than "no" to confused and unclear questions. But this is not the only reason for such a forecast. Most of our citizens are sincerely convinced that the Union must be preserved. A considerable part of them will therefore vote for the Union under any circumstances. It can be expected, however, that there will be many invalid ballots. And by all indications, a considerable part of the electorate will not go to the polls.

A short while ago polls were held in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to determine their citizens' attitude towards the restoration of independence of these republics. The results proved stunning, though the central government did not recognize them officially. In Lithuania the approval of independence was expressed by over 90 percent of people who went to the polls. With a high turnout in Latvia and Estonia, the "yes" vote made up 74 and 78 percent respectively. It will be recalled that the Russian-language population constitutes about 50 percent of the total in Latvia and 40 percent in Estonia. These results

strongly shattered the myth about the "oppression" of the Russian-language population in the Baltic republics.

Will the March 17 referendum bring a similar surprise? Incidentally, surprises have already happened.

A draft of the treaty of Union, approved by representatives of republics, has been published. The media pointed to one of its chief advantages: the draft affirms the right of republics freely to choose their national state systems. But how does this correspond to statements about the final socialist choice and the wording of the question proposed for the Union referendum? The people are urged to vote for "the preservation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." Why did the members of the Soviet Parliament recently insist on retaining this name of our state, ignoring present-day realities? The point is that several republics had already removed the words "Soviet" and "socialist" from their names. This is only one of the contradictions present in the draft.

The conditions of the problem are changing every day. Can such a problem be solved? Arguments do not admit of solutions. It seems that the referendum can have two purposes today – as a reference (as information for reflection) and as a political statement. By all indications, each of the present-day politicians will get the trump card he is expecting, because the vague question with its "yes" or "no" answer permits multiple interpretations both by advocates and opponents of the Union.

An end to the armistice

The seeming unanimity on the draft treaty of Union was disproved by Boris Yeltsin at a meeting of left-wing parties and associations in the Cinema House.

He refuted the statement that agreement had been reached on 90 percent of the treaty's provisions. Khasbulatov, head of the working group of the Russian parliament, did not sign the draft, and representatives of the Russian Federation still had many remarks about it. This part of Yeltsin's speech was sharply criticized on television the next day. However, his statement was not refuted.

Yeltsin's speech was remarkable in many respects. Following his election as chairman of the Russian Parliament he withdrew from the Democratic Russia faction. After the 28th Party Congress he dropped out of the Party. Yeltsin explained his step by the fact that his post obliges him to express the interests of all voters, not merely a part of them. Subsequently he tried to keep at an equal distance from various political trends. He left the inter-regional group of deputies in the Soviet Parliament and did not take part in the founding of the Democratic Russia movement.

I attended many conferences, congresses and meetings of the Democratic Russia. Yeltsin was expected to address some of them, but he did not come. On November 7 he took part in a rally organized in the centre of Moscow by the Democratic Russia movement. But he came to the rally from the demonstration on Red Square, where he marched along with Communist Party and government leaders.

Moscow police: the most restrained in the world?

At last, Boris Yeltsin delivered a speech at a meeting of left-wing forces. Speaking on television the next day, three members of the Soviet parliament hurled reproaches at him, saying he wanted to be politically neutral, but in fact addressed a meeting of left-wing forces. Yeltsin's speech in the Cinema House shows that he is changing the methods of his struggle against the central government. The first step in this direction was his TV interview two weeks ago and then his tour of Russia. The speech in the Cinema House was a second and a very revealing move.

Everyone noticed the use of such words as "offensive," "front" and "democracy is in danger." They should evidently be understood just as Gorbachev's call to the party to withdraw from its trenches – that is, not literally. However, Yeltsin's opponents interpret his words as a call for violence. The TV interview did not harm his popularity, as some feared it would. Telegrams in his support are still coming in from all over the country, and mass rallies are being organized. The rally held in downtown Moscow was attended by 800,000 people. After an anti-Yeltsin letter was written by six leading figures of the Russian Parliament, eleven members of the presidium of the parliament published a letter in his support. Was it an expression of "wholehearted love" for a political leader, so characteristic of our people? In any case, Yeltsin understood that he would receive considerable support.

The choice has been made

In the Cinema House the chairman of the Russian Parliament spoke not only about the forthcoming referendum. He made a brief but important statement about the army ("We are not against the army.") Yeltsin revealed his economic plan, which contrasts with what is being done by Premier Pavlov, who has not yet revealed his programme but has already exchanged 50- and 100-ruble bank notes and promised an increase in prices. Pavlov's latest step is the establishment of a committee for the stabilization of economic ties.

Yeltsin declared that a new "500 days" programme was ready and that it was intended for Russia only. He promised to speed up the privatization of land, work out a mechanism of turning land over to farmers, and revise land tenure deeds before spring sowing begins.

Of course, time is pressing. Yeltsin has to deliver a report at the special Congress of People's Deputies, which opens on March 28. During the remaining two weeks he has to do something which will bring him still more popularity and ensure the greater support of the people.

In the Cinema House the chairman of the Russian Parliament called for an offensive and the founding of a new party. The period of Yeltsin's neutral stand has ended. The policy of restraint and the readiness for compromise did not bring success, in his opinion. That is why he decided to resume the party struggle. No wonder many people heard strains of "communist" pressure and a Bolshevist tone in his speech. It was indeed a declaration of war reaffirmed.

Yeltsin's open readiness to head the democratic opposition movement, give a name to it and found a mass party as an alternative to the Communist Party could drastically change the alignment of political forces in the country and greatly strengthen the positions of democratic forces. It is surprising that the central government proved unable to take advantage of the situations when Yeltsin was exposed to attack. It did not learn to use them skilfully and benefit from such situations.

The new executive, the Cabinet of Ministers, was instituted by the USSR Supreme Soviet in the same manner as in the good old days. The government structure has not changed, and ministers are still the same

Till the cock crows thrice?

Konstantin Lubenchenko,
USSR People's Deputy

Qualifying the new Cabinet one must no doubt proceed from the basic concept, the need to renew our society in the economic field, the field of social and interethnic relations, the domain of spiritual life, and unquestionably the sphere of politics, which is associated with the recreation of a law-governed state. Whatever changes the political structure may undergo the executive remains at the pivot of restructuring.

Today our Union government is termed a Cabinet of Ministers. Is this an essential innovation? Hardly. It all started with the Supreme Soviet "revolt" midway during its Fourth Session, in the upshot of which the President proposed a new concept for the executive. This innovation psychologically defused the tense atmosphere reigning in the Supreme Soviet. But as for its content, the issue did not seem to arise. It was taken for granted that the content of new institutions, especially a Cabinet, would be new. The presidential communication was welcomed with relief, the deputies feeling that the central authority had furnished a way out of the crisis, with the new institution of government as the key leverage thereto.

That done, we saw the term instantaneously transformed into a juridical concept through constitutional amendments. The Cabinet was born of Constitutional travail and it was believed that its content and structure would appear later. This was somewhat reminiscent of the Canadian ice-hockey strategy of hurling the puck into the opponent's game area and then by bringing pressure to bear scoring a goal, literally pushing the puck into the net.

The whole thing was dished up to the accompaniment of impassioned voices telling us that the country was hit by a crisis and hence needed a strong executive, which the USSR Congress of People's Deputies should grant. However, with the passage of time it transpired that the Cabinet's content was generally speaking nonexistent and that there was no structure to it either. Its composition was set out as a list of ministries and committees. We again followed the old logic, starting not with the structure, the concept, the content, and function of the new power structure, but with the endorsement of Cabinet membership, which, in effect, hardly differed from the old Council of Ministers team. With but a few exceptions the portfolios have been given to VIPs of the old government.

Common sense caused the deputies to insist on concept and structure first. In return we were told to adhere to the appropriate constitutional article, which of course is right. As a result, though, presentation of the Cabinet law flagrantly violated the Constitution. The President should have presented the Cabinet.

Everything proceeded posthaste. Discussion of the candidates turned into wellnigh a high-pressure argument in favour of the Cabinet's formation at all costs, having precisely the members proposed. The same basic motivation of a weak executive was trotted out.

This all serves to recall Pushkin's fairytale about the golden cockerel. Until it crowed everyone slept. Yet enough time elapsed between the Supreme Soviet "revolt" and the discussion of Cabinet membership to evolve the appropriate structure. This was not done. However, the cockerel crowed, it being time for the Cabinet to discharge the functions of government. What we are doing is forming the government hastily, and carelessly, on the principle that we can clear up the muddle later.

From Council to Cabinet

Nikolai Andreyev

"The candidate nominated does not at all resemble a political suicide," Deputy Nikolai Travkin said of Valentin Pavlov. Truth to tell, to head the government today is for one to declare that he has girded up his loins. Pavlov thus described his feelings after his appointment: "If not me then who else?" However, given the present condition of the economy and state finances, given the lack of people's belief in the state and society, in their potential, anyone undertaking the extrication of us from the crisis, must be a super-hero. Of course, there are more than enough of us willing to demonstrate a one-time act of gallantry. However, to slave away, rationalize one's actions, take account of individual and social mentality and realize what work motivations are imply far more. We could designate this otherwise as the sound organization of economic life, with no room for one-time heroism. Are Pavlov and his ministers ready to think and act accordingly? We have our doubts.

Tragifarcical

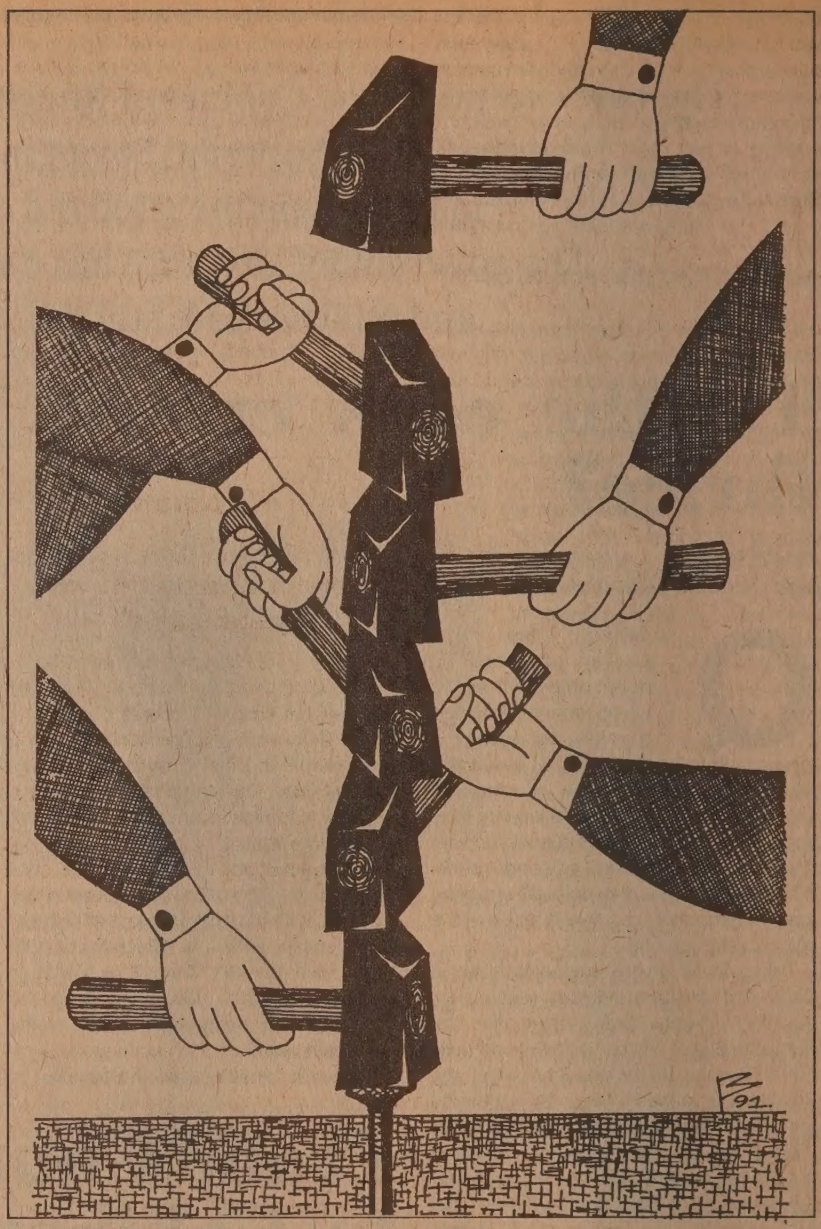
Before Pavlov was often seen in the Supreme Soviet building. As Finance Minister, he frequented parliament's most democratic place, its smoking room, where he animatedly discussed matters with deputies.

When Pavlov debuted in parliament as Prime Minister, his intonation, I felt, was condescendingly contemptuous. He took no particular pains to be understood, his slow monotonous speech being soporific, though the theme was of most topical significance implying the Cabinet's tactics and strategy, with one aspect – future price hikes – most provocative.

I am not much of an expert in the field of economics and finances. I do not know, for instance, what the exchange of hundred-ruble and fifty-ruble bank notes and the pegging of savings banks deposits actually implied in terms of benefit. I will admit that these actions might stimulate the country's resurgence. However, I cannot but doubt that though the new Prime Minister appears to have introduced a fresh verbal pattern highly familiar features bleed through.

What does this imply in concrete terms? Pavlov would have us believe that the Cabinet's subordination to the President "fundamentally changes the traditional forms and methods of government." The meaning is incomprehensible. It does not take much of an effort to see that the crown of the tree is still the same as though the names of the ministries have been changed with some divided and others integrated, the administrative-command image has been preserved. Nor has the root changed: we still have a strict ladder with the reins of government all converging on to but one person, the Communist Party General Secretary before, the President now.

Peruse Pavlov's parliamentary speech, make a simple comparative analysis and note what previous Soviet government leaders had to say about similar things. "Today we distinctly see the multiplicity and scope of the impending reorganization of the management system, its political and socio-economic aspects... The adopted policy of expediting transition... represents a turning point." Thus does Pavlov lay the keystone. However, Nikita Khrushchev started chipping away at that stone. In his report to the 21st CPSU Congress he said: "The reorganization of the management of industry and construction is crucial to expedite economic advancement." The old Premier sought the grander objective of going over to communism. Pavlov merely seeks a way out of the crisis.



Drawing by Valentin Mokievsky

However, the tools used are the same, to wit: expedition and restructuring.

Further. "In the grander perspective I would say we need jointly to recreate state territorial regulation," Pavlov outlines a clear-cut prospect. "This could be based on inter-republican agreements, economic contracts, and all-Union and interregional programmes." Now let us see what Chairman of the Council of Ministers Tikhonov had in mind in the 1970s: "Balance greatly depends on the stringent implementation by every association and enterprise, by every branch of the plan for the production and delivery of output according to the timetable and within the range required. This should be facilitated by assessing what enterprises do to discharge their contractual commitments." Pavlov adds: "The issue of the discipline of deliveries and honouring of commitments remains open."

Now and again historical parallels are most discouraging. Thus Deputy Katorgin asked the Prime Minister where all the cereals, flour and pasta had gone, if the 1990 harvest had been a bumper one. The explanation Pavlov trotted out was: "The answer to the question as to where the grain has gone is plain. It is still with the producers. The state takes care to supply

the population... Today grain has been turned into hard currency and is employed as a means of pressure." When I heard this "delightful" explanation, I could not but recall another political economist, true of greater calibre than Pavlov, namely Joseph Stalin. In 1928, when NEP was quashed, he also had the urge to explain why the country was so hard up for food despite the bumper crop. His conclusion was: "After a series of good harvest years over which the kulak managed to build up his farm and accumulated the necessary capital, he could manoeuvre in the market and place grain, that best of currencies, in reserve, preferring to bring meat to market."

Just fancy bringing meat to the urban population being viewed as a crime.

Of course, the offenders were abolished, along with the meat and grain. However, what both Pavlov and Stalin implied was that the country had no respectable currency. Its part was played both then and now, by what could be bartered, such as grain, cotton, metal, cement and what have you. This has been taking place almost throughout the entire existence of the Soviet economic system. Tikhonov indirectly confirmed that when he said: "We cannot tolerate the fact that many enterprises hold in reserve over and above the norm, equipment, feedstocks and other materials, especially metal." Naturally, they kept it for purposes of barter.

However, we seem to have focussed too much light on the Prime Minister. What about his ministers? Who are they? What do they propose?

Why name names?

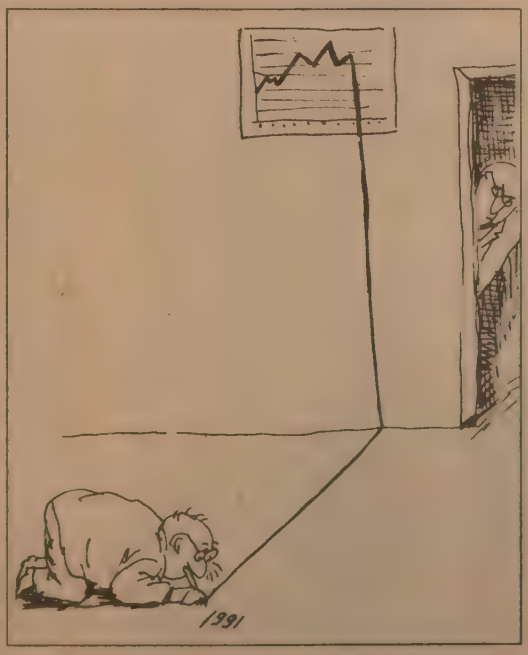
The new Cabinet members are familiar as they hail from the sadly notorious Council of Ministers. How should we take that? With scepticism, no doubt. If the old government got nowhere, what can we expect of the new government, when in effect it is composed of the same men? Deputies timidly put that question, as is to be deduced at least from the time parliament took to discuss the candidates. Whereas some eighteen months ago only three or four ministers gained approval in the space of a day, now as many as ten do.

Generally speaking, every government has five or six crucial portfolios, those of the finance, foreign, home and defence ministers. These portfolios come into focus when a new Cabinet is formed. After all, the government's overall policy depends on who gets them. We, too, have something of this order, with perhaps the KGB chief added to this range of crucial posts.

Still we have our own specific features. There are some ministers in whom parliament is particularly interested, namely, those upon whom it is believed popular welfare hinges. The most colourful case in point offered is the rejection of Trade Minister Kondrat Terekh. I well remember how favourably he was received when Ryzhkov presented his candidacy to parliament. It was said then that though this was a difficult, neglected, criminogenic field, hopefully Terekh would set things right.

However, when Pavlov proposed Terekh, the deputies rebelled, and reminded him of all the negative aspects of their own contact with the retail trade network. The basic charge was simply astounding, with Terekh blamed for the bare shop shelves. The deputies were happy to have found a scapegoat. Terekh's candidacy was rejected. Which was unfair, Terekh himself despondently observed: "Whoever becomes minister of trade today, myself or someone else, nobody can sell more cars than there are." The deputies turned a deaf ear to his plea.

Now do not think I intend to justify Terekh. Meant is the way the retail trade is organized. It will always be the whipping body. In this connection the French businessman Alex Moskovich noted in *Izvestia*: "As for the state retail network, I am convinced it should not exist at all. Why make a hawker of the state?" But our deputies are convinced that the state must be a hawker, and all half-hearted hints to abolish the trade ministry were quelled without quarter.



Drawing by Victor Bogorad

Who if not us

The reason I speak about Terekh in such detail is that to have an idea of one or another person, one must meet him face to face, while to have an idea of any industry one must also come into direct contact with it. That is simple as regards the retail trade. But if we take shipbuilding, that would be virtually impossible. Everyone can talk about the retail trade, nobody about shipbuilding.

Yet the deputies clutched at a familiar thing. The Terekh story demonstrates one more salient feature of the Soviet character, notably the ladder-like mentality. The idea is that every man has a boss over him, and that hence each shop has somewhere high up in the administrative-command system a supervisory body. Our deputies stuck to their guns on this point. Consequently, despite Pavlov's talk of new thinking the system of government has not changed. That a person must above all be his own manager is making no headway, though this is the point of departure for a sound and healthy economic system.

Listening to Pavlov and his ministers one feels frustrated that nothing can be done. The administrative-command system still holds sway across one-sixth of the globe. Instead of promoting enterprise, initiative and commerce, we have the order of the day, the edict, the plan. That was how it was, that is how it is, and that is evidently how it will be. I would not dare to stretch that point, but the obvious facts bearing out this conclusion are really too many. The system is bending over backwards to justify its existence. True, there is a trifling hindrance, the people. So what? No doubt in the whole wide world we shall find no other people capable of bearing up under such numerous social experiments. Hence they can tolerate one more.

■

After "The Red Yuletide" in Lithuania

Kseniya Myalo

The syndrome of January 13 will continue to influence the domestic political evolution for a long time. It will also affect the March 17 referendum on the future of the USSR

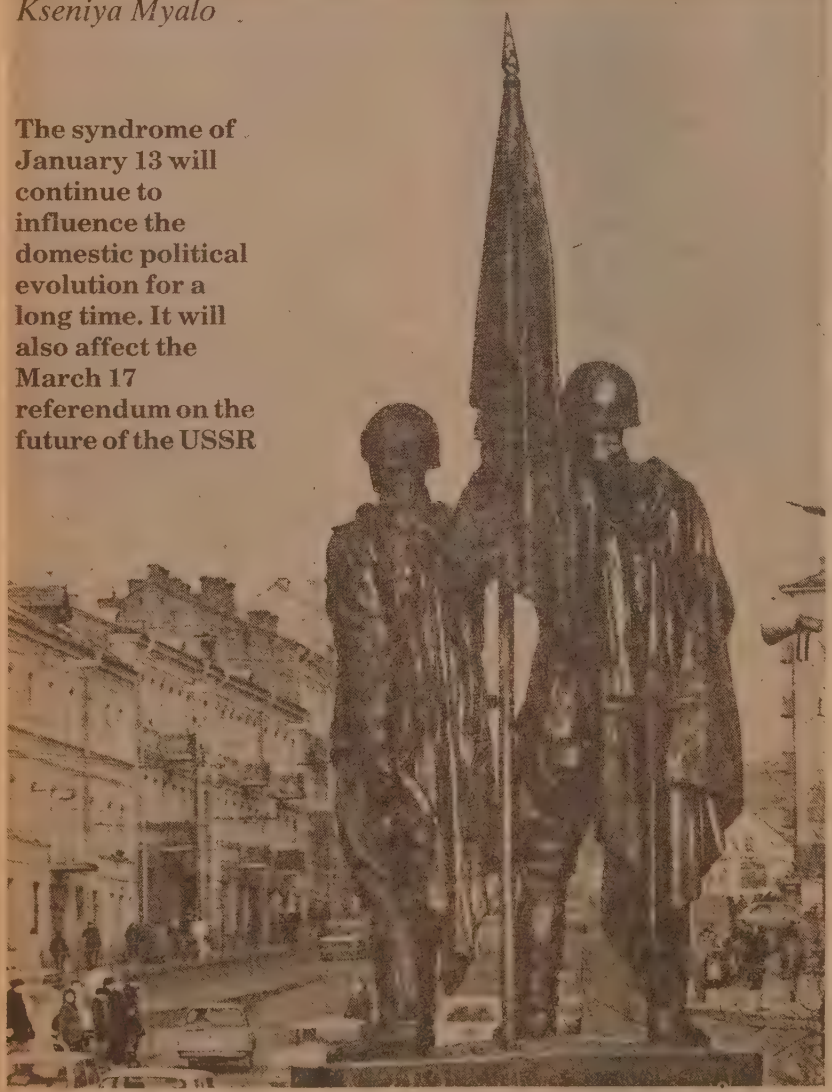


Photo by Dmitry Borko

There is no way to repair what was damaged in relations between Lithuania and Moscow on the day when ten Soviet Army tanks rolled across Vilnius, their turrents revolving in every direction, belching blank shots which shattered windows and left 362 people temporarily deaf;

Says a witness: "... Shots were heard every ten to fifteen minutes. The tanks were firing blank ammo. The guns were belching fire several metres and the shock wave spread as wide as 50 metres..."

Was there a scenario?

"Know what happened in Ferghana and Osh? The same would have happened here had it not been for the Soviet Army," people excitedly told me at the Soviet Citizens' Defence Committee mainly representing the interests of the Russian-speaking population.

I know. I was in many hot spots, including Sumgait and Ferghana, and I am not the person to reproach for being unattentive to the problems of the Russian-speaking people. On the contrary, I am used to accusations of an excessive pro-Russian slant. Nonetheless, I repeat: there were no reasons to expect another Ferghana in Vilnius.

Naturally, one should not view the situation in Lithuania through rose-tinted spectacles. It was indeed tense, but there were some specific features. Before the January events in Vilnius the situation was characterized by a political confrontation which the Lithuanian government sought to transform to an interstate, even military conflict, but not by criminal and ostensibly spontaneous actions of the mob, which are the surest sign of a coming pogrom.

In March 1990, the Supreme Soviet of Lithuania adopted a series of documents on the status of the Soviet Armed Forces in the republic and the military service of Lithuanian citizens. These documents stipulated in particular that the Soviet Armed Forces' presence in Lithuania was illegal and any activities of the Soviet Armed Forces in the republic were "an intrusion into the internal affairs of the Lithuanian republic."

Very impressive is the list of attempts to penetrate the heavily-guarded military installations and facilities and of sometimes very cruel attacks against Soviet servicemen and their family members. For example:

"On June 24 a group of Lithuanian

youths stoned the daughter of Major Serikov of Soviet Army unit 96408 for her not speaking Lithuanian. The girl is hospitalized with a severe scull damage."

"On December 10, surgeon Zaharkatre of a Vilnius first-aid station refused medical help to the daughter of NCO Malyshev (suffering from a serious arm cut) because she addressed him in Russian."

"On April 11, Capt. Semenko was beaten up by three men in a city bus and had to be taken to a military hospital in Kaunas (Soviet Army unit 36895)."

"On July 15, four unidentified middle-aged men assaulted and beat up the former Military Commissar of the republic, Major-General, Mickevičius (Ret.) in Vilnius' Čiurlionio Street. The general died of the beating several hours later."

The last fact is especially demonstrative for it shows that attacks against Soviet Army servicemen were not based on ethnic hatred – or at least ethnic hatred is less important than the fact of belonging to the Soviet Army.

The discriminatory decrees spearheaded against Soviet Army servicemen and their families also contributed to the formation of an atmosphere of intolerance. Said one report: "The city authorities in Kaunas decreed that the city bank may not give Soviet Army units any money to pay the servicemen's salaries. The military units deployed in the area were only entitled to no more than 3,000 rubles a month for current expenses. The City Council said the decision was taken due to the lack of funds in the city treasury."

"The town authorities in Taurage refused to finance the kindergarten catering to children of Soviet Army servicemen."

The difference in the attitudes to World War Two is also a factor of instability: "On November 11, the war monument – The Eternal Flame – in Šiauliai was buried under a heap of cement."

These facts are enough to help one imagine how antagonistic the different political forces became in Lithuania; on the one hand, on January 10, 500 volunteers swore allegiance to the Lithuanian Independence Acts of March 11, 1990: on the other hand, workers of the factories and plants controlled by All-Union ministries walked out in a political strike.

This political situation, however, required political, not military solutions: it is well-known that an armed interference in the relations between antagonistic political forces is more likely to touch off, not to prevent bloodshed. Besides, the scale of the military operation in Lithuania and the deployment of paratroopers and armoured vehicles there was obviously out of proportion with the reality – the Union government is much more restrained and cautious in South Ossetia where people get killed every day. Or in Namangan where the participants in the monstrous killing of five soldiers were let return home safely and the military did not fire a single shot during the unprecedented butchery. So why assemble an armoured fist in Vilnius where not a drop of blood had been spilled?

By the way, no pogroms took place in Kaunas and Klaipeda where the locally deployed Soviet Army units refused to conduct Vilnius-type operations. This fact alone makes the version about imminent pogroms doubtful.

Good-bye USSR

When they stepped in in Vilnius the military relied on intimidation (in the military jargon this is called "to show one's armour") and this insulting show of force intended for civilians acted as a catalyst for Lithuania's determination to cede from the USSR, which was first declared in March 1990.

As I watched video recordings of the January 11-13 events in Vilnius, I grew convinced that stage director charged with producing a show "The Soviet Army's atrocities" or "Russian tanks invading Europe" would have been more successful than the paratroopers urgently air-lifted to Vilnius from the Russian town of Pskov.

When I asked some military men to comment on the situation, they just answered with a shrug: "Well, there are lots of ways to do it more effectively and less obviously. For instance, a plainclothes crack team could have infiltrated the TV Centre and conducted the operation inside: another way to do it could have been to drop an assault team from a civilian chopper. Actually, there are many professional ways of doing it..."

Let me stress once again that I have no reasons whatsoever to think that it was really necessary to attack the TV Centre and the Press House. I only want to say that even if it had been necessary, the rolling of tanks across the city and the firing of blank shots would not have been needed. There was no need for a show, but a show was put up and the sequel to that show is now being played in the square outside the Parliament building.

The show is a psychological drama centered on saying farewell to the USSR, a mystery of a nation's transformation to its new self and this show may be very impressive, especially for children and teenagers. From now on their minds will only associate the words "Union" and "Soviet" with something alien, horrible and evil.

The force of these images is all the more impressive as, actually, these images are only symbols translating the surreal and bizarre events of this January which defy any rational analysis.

In fact, the only real thing is split human blood, the rest is still hiding in the shadows, obscure silouettes manipulating the shooting marionettes. The whole world saw the video recording showing a sinister figure in a trenchcoat and a fedora hat walking confidently amidst the rolling tanks and cannon smoke. However, witnesses saw other sinister figures as well: Lithuanian marksmen who lied low when a searchlight spotted them. But did they shoot?

Another mysterious character is the National Salvation Committee that made a prerecorded announcement that it assumed all power in the republic.

What is really mysterious is the situation with President Gorbachev, who is also the General Secretary of the USSR Communist Party and the Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Armed Forces. On that fatal night Gorbachev just could not been reached by telephone or otherwise, although the news concerned the republic which as it had been repeatedly stressed still remained a part of the USSR, the Communist Party and the Soviet Army.

Faces behind the masks

"...There is no need to shroud the National Salvation Committee in mystery. The NSC is not really anything extraordinary among the various strike committees existing in Lithuania, but surely, the NSC is a new level of organization. The strike committees trust it and pin hopes on it. There has long been the necessity of such a militant, revolutionary body aimed at the restoration of Soviet power in Lithuania...

"If a civil war is unavoidable – although such a war is the last thing we want to happen – the NSC is able to play a great role in it. The NSC was set up for a long-term prospect. Today the committee and its members have to stay underground but the opposing side has already had a chance to feel their presence.

"The NSC is not just another name of the CP of Lithuania, this must be made clear from the very start. In general, those who think we want to rule Lithuania are gravely in error...", said Yuozas Yermalavicius, the CPL ideological boss.

If this is not true and the mysterious NSC is not a CPL branch as most people tend to believe but an independent organization, then there are grounds to believe that a third force has emerged in the political arena. This third force immediately received the right to remain anonymous, to be irresponsible by virtue of this anonymity

and to act freely as any underground organization can act.

To be more precise, a masked figure appeared on stage and is claiming the rights of a full-fledged character in the drama.

In general, the events in Vilnius, which coincided with the Yuletide, had an aura of a sinister masquerade around them.

Says Andrius Kubilius, a Sajudis secretary:

"Actually, Gorbachev wants to do a simple thing: he plans a creeping occupation, gradual tightening of the screws. He does not like the idea of direct presidential rule for Lithuania very much. At the same time, by building up pressure he could halt and deform the natural evolution of the situation in Lithuania. He will be waiting for a strong political structure to appear in Lithuania – he wants to see his men in charge there, and this is quite real. Such people will come along – and they need not be Communists."

Premonition of civil war

Meanwhile, presidential rule for Lithuania may easily be the last hope of Lithuania's Russian-speaking population. One person who wished to remain unidentified told me about a document calling for the setting up of paramilitary units in Vilnius, other cities, rural areas, at individual plants and organizations. The document is addressed not only to the people living in Lithuania, but also to the working people of Russia, Byelorussia, the Ukraine and asks for more weapons and more volunteers to handle those weapons. "Some defence industry plants have already agreed to cooperate," the unidentified source said.

The main demand is to dissolve the Lithuanian national militia. In other words, this is an ultimatum: either dissolve, or face a civil war.

Today, however, the situation is such that one can easily put it another way round and say that any putting of pressure on Lithuanians would lead to a civil war. Today the Lithuanians regard their militia as the republic's own army, and this army's consolidation after the events of January 13 may easily be the most important development of the time after the Vilnius tragedy: this has been confirmed by people who take antagonistic political stands. Said Yermolavicius: "There was a way to prevent bloodshed: all the illegal militia units had to be disbanded. After January 15 these militia units became a volunteer army."

Said K. Uoka, a Deputy of the Lithuanian Parliament: "There were about one thousand young men assembled around the parliament building during those days. They carried makeshift weapons. Those were the days when the Lithuanian army was born, before that we had only the Lithuanian militia..."

Today the Lithuanian army's equipment and combat preparedness to defend its country are much greater than they were before the Soviet crackdown. This is confirmed by no one else but former Captain of the US "green berets" Andrius Eyve about whom both Soviet and foreign media have alredy reported. He openly took an active part in the parliament building's strengthening against possible attacks and later spoke about that effort to an interviewer from the popular Lithuanian paper *Forumas* (No.1, 29.1.91).

Meanwhile, the political antagonisms in Lithuania are being aggravated and are approaching the threshold of a civil war. The polairzation of opinions is increasingly political and inter-ethnic differences are already fading, although they cannot just disappear into thin air.

A force field of tension currently forming around the Communist Party of Lithuania and the bitter confrontation between the CPL and Sajudis are the two main political trends in the republic, and it is a sharp contrast with the democratic euphoria of two or three years ago. Sajudis' political achievements and its flagship role in steering Lithuania towards independence outside the USSR have not resulted in the long-awaited collapse of the Communists. Anyway, the Central Committee of the CPL believes the number of defectors is insignificant. Today the CPL has a strength of some 40,000 members who are subject to a strong pressure and whose choice is a principled one. This choice can be briefly expressed in the formula: "A socialist Lithuania enjoying a token independence within the USSR."

The formula advocated by Sajudis and the Lithuanian government stipulates independence outside the Soviet Union, Lithuania's joining the European and international communities, the rejection of the "ideological utopia" of what is called "the socialist choice" and the dismantling of everything connected with communism or the Communist Party. It is evident that there is no way to find a mutually acceptable solution to this difference and at some time the decisive step will have to be made. This will be a step which the other side would not put up with, the more so as the radical wing of Sajudis includes an energetic bloc of nationalist parties which are too radical to agree to concessions or a compromise: The Lithuanian Freedom League (leader Antanas Terleckas), the Independence Party (leader Virgilijus Cepaitis), the Tautininku Party (leader Rimantas Smetona, a relation to Antanas Smetona, the head of the independent pre-war Lithuania).

The nationalist parties distanced themselves from Sajudis in the spring and summer of 1990, saying Sajudis was dead. At the joint congress of these parties held on December 14-15, last year, the delegates adopted a resolution on the decolonization of Lithuania. According to this resolution, all the people who came to Lithuania after 1940 were called colonists and as such were stripped of Lithuanian citizenship. The question whether they qualify for Lithuanian citizenship would be solved on an individual basis, after the Soviet troops have been withdrawn from Lithuania.

If the radical bloc comes to power, it will naturally abolish all the recent government decrees correcting the status of non-Lithuanians in line with the internationally-accepted practice. If they are implemented, these decrees could significantly ease the ethnic tensions. The irony of the situation, though, is that operations like the one conducted on January 13 boost the positions of the Right-wing nationalist bloc and galvanize the fears of the Russian-speaking minority.

Questions without answers

Burying the Vilnius dead

Let us pay tribute to the memory of the Vilnius dead. Let us remember the Lithuanian government's bills which are worth millions of rubles as a compensation for the damages inflicted by the paratroopers as they ransacked the TV Centre. Evidently, the USSR leadership would pay – but at whose expense? If it pays the bills, will this mean that it indirectly acknowledges the illegiti-

mate character of its actions? Actually, the President (alias the CINC) has already acknowledged their illegitimacy when, after some hesitation, he distanced himself from his Army's actions.

But the troops did really act on the presidential decrees which no one has abolished so far. Does this mean that the Army is expected to go on implementing those decrees at its own risk? If so, the "Red Yuletide" may be repeated soon.

If the answer is negative, it would mean that we are already living in an atmosphere where all concepts and norms of state power have been hopelessly devalued. The appearance of "Masked figures" is a sure sign that such a devaluation has already occurred and there are no criteria of what is legal and what is not. In this atmosphere various decrees may either remain dormant like King Hammurapi's scrolls, or revive like zombies to do the killing. However, there is nothing governing the transition from lethargia to galvanic activity and such a transition defies any common sense explanations.

Speaking on the Soviet Army actions in Lithuania, Sergei Alexeyev, Chairman of the Constitution Committee under the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, said they happened in "a legal void." Does this mean that the events that predated the Army involvement were legal?

The Kremlin insists that the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic remains a part of the USSR as stubbornly as the Lithuanian leadership stresses Lithuania's independence and rejection of the "socialist choice." This situation of virtual diarchy which is now typical not of Lithuania alone is illegal by definition.

Strictly speaking, when the Soviet leadership proclaimed the formula of the USSR as a union of sovereign states and backed this formula with an unalienable rigt to secession, it gave its consent to the confederate structure of the USSR and confirmed each confederation member's right to choose its own form of statehood, including monarchy.

The Soviet leadership's room for manoeuver is seriously limited: it must either confirm the peoples' right to free choice accepting the inevitable political confrontation, or refuse to honour this right, thus moving farther away from the law-governed state and towards the ideocratic state. In Vilnius the "mask" concealed the Union leadership's unwillingness – or inability? – to make this choice, but it will have to be made soon.

Between two unions

In the legal void, in the situation when pledges are not honoured, laws do not work, emotions run high and politicians are irresponsible, the upcoming March 17 referendum acquires a special colouring. The very idea: to make the fate of a great power and all peoples living in it on a chance coincidence of wills, on the results of a one-time action, has a streak of black humour in it and makes one wonder whether the real purpose of the referendum is preservation of the USSR, as it is officially claimed. Or perhaps the real objective is to preserve the current level of all-Union power, which is quite a different thing?

Today we are all frightened that the Soviet Union may disintegrate and plunge into painful crises and civil war. The West is also starting to have the jitters.

Another variant is also possible, though: slow strangulation, self-destruction as a result of the severed energy exchange, the collapse of ideology which is rapidly losing its justification (the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics cannot exist without an integrated ideological doctrine).

This variant when Lithuania would paralyze the USSR by its staying in the Union can be traced in the memorandum circulated in circles close to Sajudis and written by a prominent European political scientist, director of the Brussels-based European Institute for Political, Social and Economic Studies, Michael von Notten. I cannot vouch for the authenticity of that document (although it has circulated in Lithuania since last January and so far there has been no official refutation of it) but in any case it is interesting and demonstrates the variety of ideas and methods currently debated in Lithuania.

The author of the memorandum suggests that Lithuania practically ignore all laws of the USSR, but not officially declare secession. In this case Vilnius could go on blackmailing Moscow with its possible secession – this combination could allow Lithuania to enjoy a privileged status in the still functioning Union with no obligations to the USSR.

Envious, other republics would try and copy the situation and the laws of the USSR would stop working across the Soviet Union. A new unprecedented entity will appear in the place of the Soviet Union, which will be as different from the old USSR as from Western democracies. In this case, all the peoples living in the USSR would lose the attributes of statehood.

What will replace "friendship of the peoples"?

It is difficult to say why the Landsbergis leadership opted not to follow this advice, but in the context of the Notten memorandum, Lithuania's Declaration of Independence adopted on March 11 last year does not look the worst possible variant. The Declaration makes the situation clear and does not obscure it further, it leaves room for negotiations, even though tough but constructive negotiations, all this instead the non-binding verbiage about "brotherhood" and "friendship of the peoples."

Today the very word "Union" sounds like a bitter reminder of the once united great power, and that power's unique and tragic history. There is no room for irony here, for this means the end of a huge period in our history. The old Union does not exist any more although many people will come to polls on Marcxh 17 to vote for it, naively thinking that the simple dropping of ballots could reanimate the dead USSR. History has no space for such miracles. The question is different today: which way of restructuring of the old Union will we prefer? One of the ways: horizontal restructuring of relations between peoples – may actually prove to be less catastrophic than we think today.

Lies are what we pay the greatest price for and the lessons of the Vilnius tragedy compel us not to succumb to the illusion that complicated problems can be solved easily. One illusion is very popular today – and it equals self-determination of republics to self-determination of peoples, which are absolutely different things.

First, practically all Soviet republics are multinational and the interests of different groups of population may contradict each other, which we can see today.

Second, most Soviet republics were formed not as a result of a democratic expression of popular will, but on the basis of purely administrative decisions taken by someone at the top. By the way, these decisions can only be viewed as legitimate in the framework of the ideology and the regime which are crumbling today.

That is why the next round of the process is already obvious: self-determination of peoples in the territories of break-away republics. The people's right to self-determination can not be questioned, and is backed with the appropriate international accords. As for the forms and the possibly violent character of such self-determination, these will depend on a number of factors and vastly on whether the authorities on all levels would recognize this right.

Going over to the market

Leonid Vasilyev

Sooner or later the country will switch to a market economy even creaking and groaning at a snail's pace. What can we expect?

Everybody already knows that the country is going over to a market economy. Whatever they might say, we are going not towards a mythical "socialist" market, but to the ordinary type of capitalist market.

So what is the matter then? Firstly, we don't know how to do it as not a single country has ever gone over to the market without having a market of its own, be it even a chained market yet nevetheless a market as the overall blood system of a live social organism, of any state.

The underworld anti-market

However, today we are compelled to abide by the rules of the black market, the illicit shadow economy. Again everybody knows that in that market with its ruthless laws, everything, including the authority upon which again everything depends, is bought and sold. Now if that is so, surely the solution is simple one thinks? Merely legalize the black market and instead of a misshapen underworld anti-market, we will have a legitimate free market. Is not how that should be?

Unfortunately no. The trouble is that our anti-market does not conform to the laws of a market economy, the only possible leverage capable of transforming it into an effective dynamic, self-governed and self-improving system. The laws it follows are those of the underworld. It is by no means fortuitous that with every passing decade our way of life, and even the vocabulary we employ draws closer and closer to the life, mentality and vocabulary of the concentration camp, with its jungle law. Each move within the context of this anti-market, whose impact upon our society increasingly broadens, exacted our society's corruption from top to bottom. To pulverize the now total – with us everything is total in a totalitarian system! – corruption and the all-pervasive venality of greedy time-servers from the powers-that-are or the office holders; we must abolish this anti-market or at least reduce it to a tolerable level, of the order one might observe in other countries even having a rather observable mafia. How though? What are we to restructure – rather crush? We must do away with the old bankrupt regime constructed according to pipedream blueprints that degenerated into a bloody drama for our country and for other countries as well. What are we to introduce in its place? A new normal market structure, that might be tentatively termed socialist or social democratic capitalism, as after all, the matter is not one of the name. But how? Everybody realizes that the mainstays of the regime must be subverted. What are these mainstays? The total authority of the state or rather party-state, administration which at the outset kept afloat through faith and fear and subsequently, though the habitual humility of a frightened demoralized nation and also as habitual links with the anti-market plus universal corruption and venality.

Hence, restructuring is conceivable only if the mainstays are completely uprooted. However, this can be done only when glasnost and democracy prove able to undermine the official stance of the still ruling party-administrative oligarchy, which in turn will serve to destroy the connections upon which the anti-market rests. It is far from fortuitous that today, a time keynoted by an overall administrative economic break-up and absolute disbalance, when far from everything depends on the corrupt administration, the black market noticeably seeks to regear, on the one hand, to backing underworld elements, which explains the racketeering, the rising crime and the sweeping scope of criminal offences and embezzlement, and on the other hand, to employing legal means of existence through cooperatives, firms and joint ventures.

Sponging on the state

For the most part our Homo Sovieticus is still not ready to accept a market economy. On the contrary, he is panic-stricken and is as frightened of free private ownership. Why? Because he has been debauched and dehumanized by the regime – which in its 70 odd years of rule, the lifespans of

Drawing by Arkady Gurśky

several generations has generated a socio-genetic anomaly, which cannot be said of Eastern Europe including the Baltic states, Moldavia, the Western Ukraine and even the socialist countries of the East – into spongers, consumers of guaranteed hand-outs. In the upshot they have almost, if not completely, lost that feeling of being master of their own lives, plus that sense of responsibility for the job in hand with its quality, its results, its efficiency, and the marketable price of the product made. All these people, who comprise the overwhelming majority, will become normal, or the more so energetic adepts of the future market. They just cannot, as they will still be only consumers and for a long time to come will eke out a rather miserable existence, staking largely upon the support of the government, the local authorities, and social security in the form of compensation, cost-of-living adjustments, and the like.

I mean far from only the so-called socially unprotected, the poor and even the beggarly, although they add up to a goodly number in our poor country, some 50 million if not more. I also mean the same number if not perhaps many more of "the ordinary people," the factory and office employees, who live and will for long live on the pay the state gives them, be they civil servants, doctors, teachers, state farm workers, or the personnel of state-owned enterprises. The matter is not of whether they will get pay rises or whether cost-of-living adjustments will be introduced to cope with inflation. No doubt all that will be done as otherwise they will not survive. The point is that everyone compelled to remain dependent on the state, will for long to come obtain virtually nothing from the market. On the contrary, their lives might even be somewhat worse than before, especially compared to categories closely associated with the market.

Our market tomorrow?

Who then will comprise the market's subjects? Primarily all who earlier existed outside the official norm. Firstly the business sharks of the shadow economy, the masters of the black market and underworld deals. The unquestionable advantage they enjoy compared to others, is that they have the market be it even a pathological anti-market, at their finger-tips, and hence their knowledge will be of great price in our future free market. These are energetic enterprising communicable folk, who know how to establish and generously pay for, the necessary connections, in short, demonstrate all those qualities that are always highly appreciated in a market economy.

Naturally, social fairness goes out of the window. Of course the man-in-the-street for whom a market economy is alien will be greatly annoyed to see those people who have enriched themselves at his expense, getting still richer in the domain of a market economy.

Note that social fairness is most fragile and easily snaps when handled by people blinded by class hate. We have already experienced sequestration, redistribution and levelling. The results are there for all to see. Hence, would it not be better to tolerate the circumstance, that in our highly-again unfortunately-imperfect world of social fairness, we will fail to acquire the wished-for fairness inasmuch as every effort thereto forged the shackles of poverty for all under a dictatorship. Would it not be better to entertain hopes now that the market will by virtue of wealth for the few, even initially by no means honest and decent – yet whoever anywhere has seen wealth initially amassed in a decent, honest way? – will enrich our impoverished land and thereby offer the option of making rational use of its grand potential as regards both its

natural resources and the brains and capabilities of its people.

Secondly, many corrupt administrators, whose adaptability, skill at extricating themselves from a cunningly woven tangle at least loss to themselves, profit-seeking brains and many other abilities will no doubt play an active part in the market economy, to further their own interests. The more so, as formally it is extremely easy for them to do so, as thus far they control the leverage of power. They can found stock companies, joint ventures, cooperatives, concerns and consortiums, and secure to themselves with enviable ease not only the directorships in these market institutions, but also tangible opportunities for market wheeler-dealing. Not to ruin themselves these erstwhile administrators will have to work hard and learn much to obtain results. Again social fairness is given the go-by. But how otherwise? Otherwise the market and hence the country generally will never prosper.

Thirdly, ordinary workers, especially in the public services, accustomed to dealing with buyers and clients will most likely comprise the greatest number of adepts of the future market. In the new conditions, having purchased shops, restaurants, barber salons or dressmaking and mending establishments, these people, who but yesterday ignored the pitifully begging client or purchaser, will be obliged to categorically re-think behaviour even though not at once as that is difficult, all to promote their own businesses. That will be the bill they personally will have to pay for the advantages the market offers. I would also include in this category the body of future farmers, being built up with such incredible difficulty plus the even more sizeable body of middlemen, brokers, buying-and-selling dealers, so customarily termed spivs nowadays. Finally, we may also include all – who sell their knowledge – college instructors, scientists, inventors, or masters of rare and prestigious crafts.

That is what our future market will be like. It must be frankly admitted that it will become a civilized market, if ever, by no means overnight, just as none of us will become civilized overnight. We shall see crude fraud, inferior quality, racketeering, high-power pressuring of buyers and sellers, and many other things that one will not see at all in a civilized market, or that if they do exist to a small degree are strictly regimented, even prosecuted.

Left, Right

On the right – although today it is hard to discriminate we shall keep by the old terms, placing conservatives on the right, and democrats on the left, the opponents of capitalism try to scare us by saying the market will not be adequately capitalistic! Some paradox!

Though a modern Western-type capitalism is advertised for Soviet people, actually the way is being paved towards the domination of a domestic criminal bourgeoisie. We simply have nowhere from which to produce any other type of capitalism," Polozkov, leader of Russia's Communists, notes in *Pravda*. As our future capitalist market will indeed be criminal to no small degree, and barely civilized, Polozkov energetically advocates socialism. Polozkov's programme has no room for the market in its universally accepted sense ("No transition to the market behind the backs of the working masses must be allowed!") – provided we discount the half-hearted call to "learn from foreign neighbours" such as Japan, "that has been able to modernize, but has not abandoned its traditions and values." In this connection, as an Orientalist let me note that the Japanese traditions and values mentioned in passing are quite different as they uphold primarily Confucian principles of a high standard, manual and mental labour, steadfast, honest competition in striving for objectives, high morality, impeccable veracity and honesty in specific matters etc., etc., that under our "own dear" socialism were irretrievably destroyed – may I mention in this connection religion and the God fearing nature of the Russian peasant who never sold his soul for a glass of vodka – where is he today, that peasant?)

The surging activity on the right represents an attempt to exploit the mentality of the regime-debauched declassé worker. However, this is of no avail. Even should it halt the arrival of the market for a time, the Polozkov programme is abortive, as nobody will do a good job for meagre pay; as a result life in the country will go from bad to worse and no "socialist" incantations can help.

On the left the democrats vary in their market assessments. Many realize all the complexities and weaknesses of our advance to the new structure, to a fundamentally different way of life of which the country is ignorant, which it fears and with which it yet has to learn how to live. The experts, and they comprise the overwhelming majority of democrats, at any rate amongst people airing their deliberations, also realize that the country will have no easy future. No wonder so much is said today about the moral decay, the acute need for spiritual resurgence, the cultural degradation and the palpable inadequacy of civilized norms in every-day living, what with the frustration, rudeness, anger, and cult of violence that are witnessed everywhere. This is all written up, by no means to revel or "vilify the country," as the Rights often make out, but to disclose the pain felt, as the clever, cultured, writing fraternity well realize that when the market arrives, moreover in what will inevitably be at the outset an uncivilized, even criminogenic form, all such symptoms of moral degradation and spiritual degeneration may receive additional nourishment.

Does this mean we would be better off without the market? The best thing would be to emerge from this slough as soon as possible, with least loss, to which end we must foresee the worst especially the morbid, inevitably scum, and hence take due precautions. We, of course, must necessarily realize that it will be impossible to foresee everything, to save everything. Thus, the situation will worsen in the cultural domain, though it should be better. It will also get worse

as regards social security for the simple reason that the number of needy, though large as it is will steeply increase. In short, the racking crisis will continue for long and many will never see the sun shine. Hence, if envisaged is a real, civilized market even not as today in Japan but as in Finland in the 1950s and 1960s, I fear that only the next generation will come to see this market in the same way, as the Jews of old did, when Moses led them out of Egypt to the Promised Land. Indeed, those going to live in a civilized market economy, must really be different, as for us the ordeal would transcend our powers.

The tried and tested method of prohibition

There is nothing at all amazing in the currently acute, unbelievably misshapen character of ethnic relationships. Indeed, we should have expected that, as in politics as in physics every action produces reaction. The decades of scot-free forceful pressure could not pass without trace. Resistance accumulated even subconsciously. As soon as the reins were loosened, the hitherto omnipotent superstructure began to disintegrate, with resistance bursting out like a long festering sore. We may of course pardon the naive for complaining that they always lived well as neighbours, whereas now it is one hell of a mess. The outburst of nationalistic pus is a symptom of the organism's malady generally. Needed is not so much an effort to drain the puss, although that should be done first, as a cure for the sick organism. How though?

Lately there has been a noticeably sharp swing to the right of the President-led central authority. Implied is not the manifest wish to consolidate the leverage of power, as that is not only normal, but absolutely essential in the context of an unbalanced economy and paralyzed administration. The entire issue is what to consolidate and how should this be done. The central authority took the easy way out of issuing unfulfillable edicts. Unfulfillable not so much for reason of none to guarantee their implementation, as for their conflict with the country's trend of evolution. The country is going towards the market which the President strove so hard to secure. However this is proceeding but tardily and poorly, and hence needed are steps to clear the way. However, some edicts, with their order-of-the-day fervour to forbid, compel and punish the disobedient seek other ends. The leadership's actions are understandable given the worry over the growing of black-marketeering and the failure to contract reciprocal deliveries or get existing contracts implemented. However, there is no rhyme or reason when instead of clearing the way towards the market and disenshackling enterprises from fiat in favour of untrammelled market commitments, a bid is made to stake on stronger central authority.

Road to Union

As I see it, in this complex situation the President is either choosing the wrong option, or losing his sense of direction. That the Union treaty is vital is understandable. However it is still more important not to lose a sense of reality and thus not put paid to the entire cause. It is absolutely obvious at the time of writing that the country is not ready to sign the Union Treaty, moreover formulated by the central authority with such haste. It will not be signed especially by republics, of whom there are no small number, including the Russian Federation, that are today led by forces more democratic than those comprising the majority in the Union parliament and central administration. It would be pointless to ignore that. Hence it is also pointless to press for the earliest signing of the Union treaty, especially in its current version. Is there an acceptable alternative? There is.

Let us revert to our market with its unique overall dimensions. The economic territory it embraces holds us together far more firmly than any political action of the Union-treaty type. Let me repeat that this is understood by all, including the republics, especially the Baltic states that are so loudly and consistently pressing for political secession from the Union into which they were forcibly integrated.

I can understand the complex, even ticklish situation in which the President has now found himself. He encounters pressure from every quarter and must needs reckon with the views of the generals, of the Russians in the Baltics, and generally with notions that any such concession offers a precedent, following which the Union might disintegrate. Surely it is high time to realize that the Union no longer exists as an impire. Surely it is high time to turn from slogans about voluntary association to the tangible principle of the voluntary entry of sovereign republics into a comity replacing the Union within which we shall see both republics closely associated by political union (Union treaty) the extent of each of whose sovereignty and independence will be stipulated as wished, and those not formally within this Union such as the Baltic republics but obliged to gravitate towards it as from the angle of a market economy they simply have nowhere else to go. Of course, they will have to make certain concessions.

Despite a displeased top brass, our army will have to quit republics pressing for that. Our KGB will no longer exert all-powerful sway in these same territories. The central authority as a whole will be weaker, which, incidentally, does not necessarily imply that the future comity or commonwealth, will not be a strong state formation, will not be a powerful confederation of states. It is important to stress that, as if the Union goes and no politically strong commonwealth or confederation emerges, the situation will be pregnant with unpredictable complications in foreign policy. On the other hand, the said danger is non-existent. It is a myth trotted out by the Rightists to scare us, as they are worried that the omnipotent empire resting on force will collapse. Yet it is high time to realize that the empire has already disintegrated and will never be put together again. It is not worth while wasting energy, time and nerves to that end. It is far more important to create and preserve, by employing market leverage a comity, a commonwealth, a new Union of sovereign republics which would have independent states gravitating towards it and associating themselves with it. ■

The military budget riddles

For many years the Soviet Union tried to maintain strategic parity with the United States, Western Europe, China and Japan combined. As a result defence spendings were a much heavier burden on the Soviet economy than on the US economy

Sergey Rogov,
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According to official statistics, the Soviet Union's defence spendings amounted to 8.5 percent of its GNP for 1989 and 7.6 percent of its GNP for 1990. The corresponding statistics for the United States are 5.9 and 5.4 percent, for most Western European countries about 3 percent and for Japan 1 percent.

Quantity instead of quality

The comparison of the official military budgets of the Soviet Union and the United States demonstrates serious differences in the pattern of the two countries' military budget expenditures; while the Soviet Union spends the largest amount of money on procurement of military hardware, the largest slice of the US defence budget goes to the maintenance of the Armed Forces. In general, R&D, procurement of military hardware and construction of military installations take up over 66 percent of the Soviet defence budget and only 42 percent of the American.

America spends twice the corresponding Soviet percentage of its defence budget on the maintenance and upkeep of its armed forces; America's professional army requires much greater spendings, but this is not the main thing that matters. What is really important is that the United States spends 29 percent of all military allocations on the upkeep of hardware and combat training, while the Soviet Union spends only 12.5 percent on these items.

The ratio between the investments (the Americans include in this category all R&D spendings, procurement of new hardware and military construction spendings) and the current expenses is inverse. This reflects general tendencies in the Soviet economy where the share of accumulation is artificially swollen against the share of consumption and in the budget which lays a too strong emphasis on quantity and capital investments, while the significance of the infranstructure, especially of the material and technical supplies is systematically denigrated. The pay of Soviet servicemen remains low as well.

An especially unfavourable indicator in the Soviet military budget is the ratio between the current spendings and spendings on the military hardware.

This results in the low level of technical maintenance, frequent failures, chronic lack of fuel and lubricants and spare parts, low intensity of combat training, etc. Suffice it to recall accidents on Soviet submarines.

The situation forming in the hi-tech areas of the Armed Forces is especially critical. Experts note that the supply of spare parts for many types of presently operational aircraft has been stopped almost completely. The situation in the Air Force is literally desperate: spare parts and various instruments are in a dramatically short supply which hampers both the mission-readiness and safety of flights. In such conditions, Air Force technicians have to cannibalize aircraft to get spare parts for others.

The production of new hardware which must be revamped by 4 to 5 percent each year (assuming a period of usefulness of hardware of 20-25 years, this is reasonable). The problem here is that as of December 16, 1989, following Gorbachev's announced military reductions we possessed 63,900 tanks, 76,500 armoured vehicles and 66,900 pieces of artillery. This means that each year we produce 3-4 thousand tanks, armoured vehicles and pieces of artillery. That is approximately as many as is produced in the rest of the world.

The official Soviet data relating to expenditures on military purchases in 1989, allow one to compare the relative costs of such items in the Soviet and US economies. For example, we spent 2.169 billion rubles on missiles and warheads whereas the US spent 15.123 billion dollars. According to US data (there are no Soviet figures available), the Soviet Union purchased with this money 2,240 missiles while the US bought only 630. Thus the ruble here has fourteen times the purchasing power of a dollar. The same can be said of aircraft, tanks and artillery for which the purchasing power of the ruble is six to fourteen times greater than that of the dollar. That is, in defence spending, our ruble is far from being completely worthless when compared to the dollar, especially in aerospace industry.

The expenditures on weaponry simply do not reflect its real worth as the prices of military hardware in the command-administrative economy of the USSR were kept artificially low.

From this perspective, one can see that the disproportions in the Soviet defence budget between the expenditures on the purchase of weapons and on technical items and expenditures on the maintenance of this

equipment and upkeep of the Armed Forces are still greater and the real cost of purchased equipment is several times (according to some estimates eight times) higher than the admitted cost. Correspondingly actual military expenditures, given realistic price formation, taking into account that the real expenditures on weaponry and hardware makes up over 40 percent of the military budget, would be from 2.5 to 3.5 times higher than those admitted to in Soviet defence budget figures for 1989 and 1990.

Thus it is impossible to agree with the assertion that our expenditures on defence amount to only one-fifth of the total American expenditures. The view that our defence is cheaply bought is wrong.

Analysis of the structure of defence spending also points to low social protection of the officer corps which leads to a reduction in the level of defence preparedness of the Soviet armed forces and to the loss of their prestige in society.

Overemphasis on quantity leads to a reduction in quality. For years having spent considerable sums on maintaining a quantitative superiority over NATO in many types of weaponry, the Soviet Union, in the opinion of many specialists, nonetheless failed to achieve an overall military superiority.

One-sided disarmament?

The decision of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union to cut defence spending was not put into effect. Our defence budget, which, according to stated plans, was to have been reduced by ten percent between 1989 and 1991, in actuality increased from 77.3 to 96.5 billion rubles in today's prices. Nonetheless we are assured that in actual prices there was a decrease in expenditure of 16 percent. However Ministry of Defence plans by 1995 to raise defence spending to a level of 122.4 billion rubles (in constant prices), in average an increase of 57 percent over 1989 figures.

Drawing by Victor Bogorad

The Soviet military budget for 1991 approximately equates to the total expenditures on agriculture, science, socio-cultural projects, the law-enforcement agencies, clean up after the Chernobyl tragedy and the Aral programme combined.

The cut in defence expenditures, when compared to former figures of the five year plan, was to amount to approximately 30 billion rubles. In the US, planned military spending over the years 1989–1993 of 1.829 trillion dollars in current prices is now being subject to a 349 billion cut announced by the defence secretary. Congressional budget chopping last fall should result in a further 60 million dollars in cuts.

US defence allocations over the past two years have decreased from 303.3 to 285.6 billion dollars, a drop of six percent in today's prices and 12 percent in constant prices. In comparison to 1985 military expenditures have decreased by 20 percent in constant prices.

The Bush administration plans a further 12 percent cut by 1996 and a cut in the armed forces of 25 percent. The number of military personnel should be reduced by 200,000 over the 1991–1992 fiscal years to 1.6 million by 1996.

As for the Soviet armed forces, they are supposed to be reduced by 12 percent from 4,258,000 to 3,758,000.

Our Ministry of Defence, according to the military reform, is planning to reduce the size of its armed forces by the end of the 1990s to 3–3.2 million men (a reduction of 25–30 percent as compared to 1989).

Thus if one compares defence budgets in today's prices, one obtains an unexpected figure: we have sharply increased our defence spending while they have reduced theirs. If expenditures are compared in constant prices, then cuts look to be similar.

Personnel cuts are also comparable. Even after cuts we will have two times as many men in our armed forces as the US. Thus we have little fear of cuts being one-sided.

Dubious approach

As early as 1988 a reorientation of the armed forces along qualitative lines in the technical sense, in military science and in the composition of the armed forces was proposed. However, the declaration of the unilateral cut in the size of the Soviet armed forces of December, 1988 notwithstanding, the faulty military structure and expenditures remain what they used to be. In 1990 defence budget, the amount of expenditures on the purchase of weapons and on

R&D rose from 42.2 to 43.7 percent. Pay to servicemen was decreased by 7.4 percent.

At the same time, there was an absolute and relative decrease in funds spent on research and development, which, considering the disadvantage we are at in this field compared to the West, could have serious consequences for us. In 1991, expenditures on research and development were cut by 23 percent while expenditures on the purchase of weapons systems continue to rise. In 1989 the ratio of expenditure on R&D to purchase of weapons was 1:2, and now it is less than 1:3. According to projections of the Ministry of Defence this decade expenditures on the purchase of weapons will increase in constant prices to comprise more than 47 percent of the defence budget, while the portion of the budget allotted to R&D will drop to 12 percent.

The military reform to be implemented by the Ministry of Defence by the end of the 1990s includes a reduction of 30 percent in strategic nuclear forces, a 18–20 percent reduction in the size of the air defence forces, a 10–12 percent reduction in the ground forces and a 6–8 percent reduction in the size of the air force. As far as the navy is concerned, this is not discussed in the programme's outline.

This is a dubious approach to the issue as the Paris agreement on conventional forces calls for significant cuts in ground forces and prior to the signing of the agreement, three-fourths of our total land forces were based in Europe equipped with 136,800 tanks, armoured personnel carriers and pieces of artillery, which according to the agreement must be cut to a figure three times less than this. Taking into account the previously announced cut in forces in Asia, the cuts in personnel should amount to no fewer than 50, not 10–12 percent.

However, we have decided to continue vast expenditures and have transferred to the east of the Urals as many troops as are possessed by NATO. In the course of this transfer, our forces in Asia have been reequipped and significant reserves of weapons (equivalent to several years production) have been amassed. Clearly this is connected with the efforts of the military leadership to preserve intact the structure of the armed forces.

But is there any reason to do so? Even after fulfilment of the terms of the Paris agreement, we will still have from 33.3 to 37.8 percent of the total land forces on the continent, far more than any other state. True, after the terms of the agreement have been fulfilleld, NATO will possess a superiority in tanks over us of 1.5 to one and in artillery and aircraft of 1.3 to one. However, this excludes our forces in Asia and even if a part of our weaponry in Asia is dismantled, we will still have more weapons than all the countries of NATO (including those deployed in the US).

Money for the military industrial complex

Why is it that in 1991 the funds allocated not to conversion but to expenditures on the purchase of weaponry and military technology in the USSR rose almost by a third and a portion of the defence budget rose from 26 to 36 percent? After all, the production of technical items for the military is being reduced. According to the announcement by the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR, M.A. Moiseyev, the volume of production of armaments for 1989–1990 fell by almost 20 percent. In 1991 the purchase of weapons and technical items will similarly be reduced by one-fifth.

The cut in serial production will no doubt lead to an increase in the cost of techology, for example of tanks by 14 percent. And this year, the costs will rise even further. The cost of a single tank will rise two-fold, and aircraft one and a half times and so on. This is due to salary increases, and the costs of raw materials and energy. We are told that it is for these reasons that the cost of armaments will increase by 13.8 billion rubles.

However, that kind of counting gives rise to doubts as to its accuracy. For example a cut in the production of armoured personnel carriers by 50–65 percent, even given a two-fold increase in its price, should not lead to an increase in expenditures on this item. A cut in the production of aircraft by 30 given price increases of one and a half times should not significantly increase the expenditures on this item.

An item by item analysis of the expense budget leads one to question the need for various expenditures this year. The expenditures on social protection for military personnel are to rise only insignificantly. The main increase will simply add to the military industrial complex, allowing it to retain its efficiency in new economic conditions even given a reduction in the production of armaments.

It seems fit to mention that the almost unnoticed 25 billion ruble increase in military spending this year is precisely the amount of money the General Staff estimates as the amount needed to change over to a professional army, something they were opposed to.

Thus we are talking about, first, a planned relatively small quantitative decrease in the armed forces coupled with inadequate attention being given to an increase in their quality; second, the military industrial complex not only does not plan on reducing its expenditures but is planning their further increase even when inflation is taken into account and, third, the tendency to spend more on arms purchases continues. In addition, expenditures on the upkeep of the army and the navy are further to be reduced, which means that the same old social problems involved with them will continue to exist.

The emphasis on gross quantity continues to persist in military con-

struction which has an effect not only on the range and depth of the conversion process, but also hinders progress towards an improvement in the quality of the defence of the Soviet state.

Exhausting ourselves

Just over forty years ago, a document entitled NSC–68 was written which determined American strategy in the Cold War and which called for the exhaustion of the Soviet Union by means of an arms race. We accepted America's challenge and achieved parity, but at what a cost... Today the Cold War is over, but there remains a departmental interest which keeps us tied to a purely quantitative defence. This inertia is opposed to guaranteeing the security of the nation. The planned rise in military spending in the face of a radical reduction in the requirement for armaments, it seems, reduces to zero the chances of something good coming of the military conversion.

Does the defence budget for the 1990s take into account the realistic economic capabilities of the Soviet Union and the change in the nature of the external threat to our country? Will our economy beginning a switch over to market form of economic relations, not collapse under the weight of massive military production? If we want our economy to be geared towards the needs of the consumer, if we want our culture to develop and our system of social welfare to provide at least a bare minimum to the lower-paid segment of the populace, we must stop thinking in gross terms.

Without radical military reform, the current volume of defence spending can deepen the economic difficulties our country is facing today, disrupt the process of conversion of military industries to civilian ones, all without improving the defence capabilities of the Soviet Union. ■

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The war is over. What will peace be like?

International politics is entering a new stage, when interdependence will be stronger and confrontation more dangerous

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New Times. There is no doubt that the Gulf war and the whole complex of problems connected with it will have a tremendous significance for the formation of a new world structure. But to define the emerging tendencies, one needs to have a clearer definition of that war and that complex of problems.

S.B. The Gulf war was the beginning of a new stage in international relations. The conclusion of the war coincided in time with a number of international factors. First, the end of the East-West confrontation and the natural weakening of the Soviet Union's international role and the rapid emergence of new figurers in international politics, like Saddam's Iraq would not make themselves known, but it is obvious that we soon will see that the Saddam regime is by no means an exception. The states belonging to this new category feel deprived, not so much of wealth, but of international influence. The danger is that these new international characters may possess powerful means enabling them to pursue a policy of confrontation, militarily as well as economically (when I mention the economic levers of influence, I mean some

countries' control over their energy deposits.)

This stage is the world politics, however, can by no way be described as Pax americana. The Americans understand all too well – and the Gulf war proved this – that their interests focus on the building of an interdependent and carefully balanced world system. The postwar policy of the United States will be to seek and reveal various factors that might strengthen mutual support, co-development and growing mutual responsibility.

I.M. The Soviet-American cooperation during the Gulf conflict proves that a new stage in international relations has already come. In the past, Soviet-American confrontation served as a catalyst of many regional conflicts, but at the same time it helped contain regimes like that of Saddam in Iraq. When the world picture changed, leaders of the Saddam type regarded it as a new hope and chance.

While the lessons of the Gulf crisis still await an indepth analysis, I would like to draw your attention to one fact: after the end of the Cold War, there used to be illusions that weapons might become much less needed. Remarkably, Saddam did not share those illusions. Besides, the military level of the response Saddam got in return for his adventurism was so impressive that it gives much food for thought.

Besides this, I would like to stress again that this new stage in the international relations cannot be described as Pax americana. The fact that the United States has demanded financial contributions from its allies in the Gulf war demonstrates that American might has its limits, that the Americans know those limits and understand that the new stage the international community is entering will be much more complicated than any of the definitions we are now using to describe it.

N.T. Speaking about the current stage of world politics you used the terms "interdependence" and "co-development." Does this mean that political sciences may soon have to drop the concept of a "power centre" when describing international situations?"

S.B. I do not think the two tendencies contradict each other. When the world was bipolar, there were two "power centres" which opposed each other. Now the situation is much more complicated. The United States is, obviously one "power centre." Another such centre is Western Europe which is rapidly moving towards integration and "unity in variety." Last but not least, there is also Japan. Also considered must be the new power subcentres, some new industrial nations among them. At the same time, "negative" power centres are emerging, which do not want to spend years seeking optimal ways of developing. These are totalitarian regimes whose aim is international brigandage. A precarious pattern appears in which the old power centres must protect the world order from any attempts to undermine it, and the new "negative" power centres constitute a formidable threat to the emerging, new phenomenon. It is important not to overlook the fact that however bitter it might have been, the East-West confrontation was at least controllable. The new confrontation defies control. By the way, I am not at all convinced that the nuclear non-proliferation treaty is worth something more than the paper it is printed on. Future accords on non-proliferation of missile technologies and chemical weapons will hardly be more valuable either. The genie is out from the bottle and is hard to put back...

I.M. I am sure that the analysis of the international situation based on the power centre premise remains very important. However one restriction must be introduced: the very concept of power has to be reconsidered. Some fifty years ago a state's military might served as the averaged indicator of that state's strength. Today the situation is different and is likely to change even more in near future. Other parametres of strength ought to be taken into account as well, most particularly, economic potential. By the way, Saddam was well aware of that when he reached out to gain control over more oil.

Facing the truth, we must admit that the Soviet Union's overall strength as a world power centre is rapidly weakening. Until the country has gone through the period of inter-restructuring, this tendency will remain in force. At the same time the United States retain its international strength and influence. Does this mean that the world is becoming unipolar? I don't really think so. The Persian Gulf crisis has demonstrated that the US is the only real global power centre. At the same time, the significance of other power centres, including the Soviet Union, remains the same, if not greater. The Soviet Union has been and will remain a great Eurasian superpower which will always exert a tremendous influence on the international affairs by virtue of its geopolitical location and practically unlimited resources. There are no reasons to conclude that all the characters on the world scene, the US included, will have to reckon with this country.

The problem is that the international order must be controllable. Now that the rules of the game have become tougher the international order is more difficult to control. I believe, though, that the Gulf war has made a lot of things clearer. A next Saddam will have to think twice before getting into international adventures. I cannot agree with those who are pessimistic about the value of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. By itself, the treaty is really no more valuable than the paper it is printed on. But if it is to be backed with real guarantees provided by several nuclear powers, including guarantees based on armed force, the temptation to use nuclear weapons will be possible to control and contain. Saddam could have used chemical and biological weapons and radioactive contamination during the Gulf war, but he never did that. There is a certain threshold beyond which even people like Saddam display common sense.

The right of the strong...

S.B. With all due respect for the anti-Saddam coalition's noble goals in that war, one has to admit that the war was a joint action in a region which is critically important to the very existence of modern civilization. If cut off from the region's oil resources, the world economy would grind to a halt, and there was no need to prove that to public opinion in the countries involved in the anti-Saddam coalition. It is easy to imagine a conflict which will not promise such grave consequences for the world economy. Will another coalition be banded together as easily in such case? Will this new coalition be able to perform as resolutely and effectively?

N.T. I would share the pessimistic view that has already been expressed here. On the other hand, I would like to remind you that while the conflict was raging in the Gulf, Libya meddled in the affairs of Chad once again. This fact was ignored by all influential powers. As for Saddam's decision not to use chemical or biological weapons in the war, this cannot be ascribed to the Iraqi leader's noble character or humanism: there were much weightier reasons. One such reason is the fact that Saddam was not supported by any Permanent Member of the UN Security Council. Meanwhile, certain quarters in this country would love to get the Soviet Union involved in the conflict on the Iraqi side. Although these quarters do not enjoy any broad public support, one should not forget that when he unleashed the Cold War with the United States in the late 1940s, Joseph Stalin was not supported by the war-weary Soviets either. Today, the influence of public opinion on policy-making is much stronger in this country than fifty years ago, but it is still too early to suggeest that there is no way back to the old bipolar world. Some Soviet media have been coming up with a recipe on how to return to a bipolar world: by joining the South in its opposition to the developed North.

S.B. One should not cherish illusions that this policy is supported by only a tiny fraction of Soviet public opinion. In the early postwar years, the policy of confrontation could not have been opposed at home because there was Stalin behind it. Fortunately, we do not have a Stalin today. Nonetheless, many influential figures in the Soviet Union would very much like to see the Soviet Union support Iraq in the war.

Let us imagine that the Soviet leadership opted for the pro-Iraqi policy. What Third World allies would have remained loyal to the USSR? India? The Indian leadership unambiguously speaks in favour of a long-term cooperation with the West. Egypt, Saudi Arabia, most oil-extracting countries? By no means. Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, or the ASEAN states? Certainly not. What country would be a Soviet ally in this country's confrontation with the West, then? In reality, none of the possible alliances offers any hope that a bipolar world could be restored.

We must remember that even if the Third World decides to consolidate and elect a leader, this leader will be China, and only China. The Soviet Union's half-European origin is so obvious that the hypothetical choice will be in China's favour anyway. In its turn China is very close to the Third World and its policies in recent years have been more refined and well-balanced. It may sound cynical, but if the Soviet Union does not pull itself out of the crisis it is in, China will soon overtake it as a possible Third World leader. That is why even if the concept of the Soviet Union's becoming a "Southern" power is realized, the Soviet Union's will not play the leading role in the Third World. Besides this, such a transformation would cause an unprecedented political split in this country...

I.M. I do not think it is correct to draw a line of division between the North and the South. In fact, such a division is purely abstract. There are different countries and different groups of countries. There is nothing more to this. Does the Soviet Union belong to the North? It does, certainly. On the other hand, when contrasted with the United States or Western Europe, the

Against the strength of right?

Soviet Union appears to be a very specific part of the North, if a part of the North at all. The South is no monolyth either. It is impossible to single out a criterion on which to divide the world into two different groups of countries.

N.T. But such a criterion did exist in the past...

I.M. It did, and in the not-too-remote past too. This criterion is ideology. Today it is obvious, however, that dividing the world on the basis of ideologies is madness. The world is too complex and heterogeneous than we used to believe. And I would agree with the rest that has been just said: the Soviet Union has nothing to offer to the Third World and, consequently, cannot claim to be the Third World leader.

N.T. What about weapons?

I.M. The Soviet military-industrial complex remains very powerful. It is turning out produce which must be sold. In the context in which the domestic arms market is continuously being reduced, the MIC is looking for foreign clients. The demand for weapons is great in the Near and Middle East. For obvious reasons, Western-made arms are more sought-after, but what matters for us is the prospect: the demand for arms will not decrease in near future. That is why I am sure that a realistic control over the arms trade is an imperative.

N.T. The United Nations must play an important role in the world we have been discussing. This role will be played anyway: either by the UN presence in international relations, or by its absence ...

S.B. I believe that the United Nations' significance will vastly depend on whether the Soviet leadership continues its policy of cooperation with the West. If it does, the United Nations will be able to effectively participate in the effort to safeguard world order. Besides, I would like to stress that the number of the Permanent Members of the UN Security Council is not a magic figure. The composition of the UN Security Council grew out of World War II. Isn't it time we stopped regarding Germany and Japan as defeated nations? Are Germany or Japan less influential than Great Britain or France, or even the United States and the Soviet Union?

I.M. I believe that the Gulf crisis has been a hard test of the United Nations strength and effectiveness. Three powers – the United States, the Soviet Union and China – played a special role in the UN efforts. It is still underestimated in this country that as a US president, George Bush is largely unconventional: any of his predecessors would have relied exclusively on unilateral US measures, while Bush managed to build a coalition making extensive use of UN capabilities. However, the key word in the implementation of anti-Iraqi measures belonged to Moscow (but one should not forget China's constructive silence).

I agree that the United Nations is imperfect, but I do not think the composition of the Security Council should be expanded, for the simple reason that a larger Security Council would generate an unhealthy competition among UN members willing to join the very selective club which the Security Council is. Besides, there may also be mutual claims: why, for instance, Germany and not Japan or Italy? I believe we must remember that everything that is created by humans is imperfect and try to make the most of the United Nations' positive features.

N.T. The Persian Gulf crisis came as a hard test for the USSR and other countries. One may expect that this test will have long-term consequences which will affect the domestic political situation in this country...

S.B. It is clear that the coalition of developed and developing countries which had been assembled to counter and defeat Saddam Hussein can work. The real question is the Soviet Union's role: with the coalition or in the opposition to it. So far the Soviet Union has pursued a clear-cut policy vis-à-vis the Gulf crisis and this country was de-facto a coalition member, although it did not participate in the coalition militarily.

I would like to stress that Soviet attempts at talking Saddam into withdrawing from Kuwait could and had to be an integral part of the Soviet Gulf policies. The real problem: surfaced when some Soviet media, including some of those which are described as "close to official quarters" started claiming that the anti-Saddam coalition was exceeding the limits of the UN Security Council mandate and insisting that the Soviet Union "pronounce its weighty word" (although I cannot imagine what the USSR could say or do in this case)... Many influential Soviet policy makers continue to believe that anything that contradicts the plans or policies of the West may, in one way or another, be beneficial to the USSR. This is a very dangerous philosophy. In my opinion, this conclusion is one of the most important lessons the Soviet Union should learn from the Gulf crisis. During the conflict, the Soviet Union took a completely justified stance. This country should not have produced an impresion that it might drop its Gulf policies. Attempts at a compromise with Saddam could only have damaged the Soviet Union's international position, but forutnately the war was over before this new political course was finally defined.

A few words about the so-called Islamic factor in the USSR. I believe that the acuteness of the Islamic question in the USSR today is the result of the current plight of the Soviet Union's Islamic underbelly. For decades, the Soviet leadership has been advertising the Islamic regions' prosperous and happy life, but in reality there was no prosperity or concern about the Islamic culture or inter-ethnic harmony. At the same time, the Islamic factor in the USSR should not be directly linked with this country's foreign political activities. Several Islamic countries participated in the anti-Saddam coalition, but there was no popular uprising in any of them.

I.M. The Soviet management of the Gulf crisis appears to have been almost optimal to me. There were some nuances, of course, but on the whole the difference between the Soviet and American approaches was a correct reflection of the two superpowers' different interests in the region. The Soviet tactics were is more of a problem. Evidently, the Soviet Union should not have overestimated the Iraqi might and should have been firmer in insisting that Iraq honour all the coalition's demands with no preliminary conditions. It was absolutely in the Soviet interests however, to see the conflict end quickly and with a minimal use of armed force.

In principle the Soviet Union and the West are equally interested in Near and Middle Eastern stability. The problem is what methods should be employed to create this stability. For the USSR, it is more important that stability be obtained in a non-violent way. In this respect, by the way, the Soviet stance largely coincides with that of West European states which in principle are against the use of armed force in the Middle East. However, the Gulf conflict had gone too far and there was alternative to the military option. Nonetheless, it must be remembered that any military conflict may entail unpredictable consequences. The seismic waves sent by the Gulf war to the rest of the world may touch off new quakes in this country too.

Today and in the future the Soviet Union will preserve its interests in three key regions: Europe, the Asia-Pacific region and the Middle East. As for the Middle East, the Soviet Union's interest there is in preservation of regional stability. In this context Soviet interests can only be secured by the Soviet Union's cooperation with the West, particularly, with the United States of America. I am sure that the US is prepared to cooperate with the USSR in the Middle East. The partial coincidence of Soviet and American interests in the Middle East is the premise on which to build Soviet-American relations in the region. On the other hand, we must not be afraid of contradictions either. From this point of view, I do not see anything wrong with the Soviet Union's raising the question about the limits of the Security Council mandate. Clarity is always preferable.

On the whole, however, the Soviet Union has to reject its instinct to act contrary to the US interests in any conflict, including the affairs of the Near and Middle East. In its turn, Washington should revise its policy of containing the USSR in the region. I believe both the USSR and the US are prepared to go beyond the limits of containment strategy. This is of crucial importance for the Soviet Union because this country is interested in stability along its borders as it has never been before.

Photos from Paris Match and Newsweek

Scenario of postwar settlement

FRANÇOIS HEISBOURG, director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, looks at the causes and aftermath of the routing of Iraq's war machine

New Times. The operation Desert Storm has ended in an impressive victory of the coalition. How would you explain such a rapid defeat of the Iraqi forces?

François Heisbourg. From the political point of view, I would explain the quick rout of the Iraqi forces by the fact that they were confronted with a coalition formed in a very short period of time.

But the matter should also be regarded from the military point of view. First, the allies had an absolute superiority in logistics. This was a determining factor more important than ever before. There was also no question about their preponderance in artillery, tanks and aircraft. Right after ground operations began, it became clear that the Iraqi troops had been completely demoralized.

Second, the allies had an absolute superiority in the air. One should also take into account high-technology military equipment and direction and control systems. In this sense I share Marshal Yazov's view, who spoke about the need of revising the Soviet view of anti-aircraft defence.

N.T. Don't you think that a new spiral of the buildup of high precision and computerized weapons could become one of the consequences of the Gulf war?

F.H. Of course, the states which did not have new types of weapons will want to possess them. I do not rule out that this may take the form of a new spiral in the arms race. But I hope that common sense will prevail and the countries already involved in the arms limitation process, first of all the United States, Canada, the USSR and West European states, will be able to agree on the levels of their sufficiency and control over their export.

N.T. How would you assess the Soviet Union's efforts in searching for a way out of the crisis in the region?

F.H. I would note three phases of Soviet activity. During the first phase, prior to military operations, Moscow's efforts to avert bloodshed deserve only praise. It is important to mention here coordinated actions between Gorbachev and Bush.

The second phase ended on February 22. The role of the USSR as an honest mediator does not arouse doubts. However, it can be noted that during this phase Moscow unfortunately tried to communicate more with Baghdad than with the allies. Moscow's resulting position became known first not in London, Paris or Washington, but in Baghdad.

The third phase began on February 23, when Moscow suddenly informed the world of the joint Iraqi-Soviet initiative. Frankly speaking, it surprised many people. It is apparently one thing to have some plan as the basis for discussion and another thing to put it forward as a joint initiative with the aggressor to whom certain claims had already been made through UN channels. In general, the initiative was assessed not as mediation, but something different. Moreover, after February 23 Moscow called for cease-fire. This was absolutely unreasonable to my mind.

Moscow was clearly guided by a sincere desire to avert bloodshed. However, in my opinion, the third phase of its activity demonstrated nothing else but the inability of Soviet diplomacy to influence even its traditional partners. Moscow's attempts cast doubt on Soviet-American and Soviet-West European relations. This does not mean that they will deterirate. They will simply have less weight in international affairs.

N.T. How do you see a postwar arrangement in the region?

F.H. I think that in the given situation we cannot do without arms control and the establishment of demilitarized zones in the border areas between Kuwait and Iraq, as this was done in the area of the Golan Heights. In doing so it is necessary to retain Iraq's full sovereignty over its southern part where the establishment of a demilitarized zone seems to be most expedient. There is already a precedent in this sense – the agreement between Israel and Egypt on a zone in the Sinai Desert.

I also hope that certain agreement will be reached between the major exporters of weapons. It may be a sort of joint agreement between the Soviet Union, the United States, China, Britain and, possibly, Brazil. Such a mechanism of control over the arms trade must be set up. There must be an absolutely clear mandate from the UN Security Council.

The best scenario is the maintenance of the peace-keeping forces in the region. I feel it must consist of troops under the UN flag. It is possible that some contingents from allied countries can take part in such a force. They must stay in Kuwait. A decision will possibly be taken to station UN observers in southern Iraq.

N.T. The problems of the region cannot apparently be solved without an international conference on the Middle East.

F.H. I would not drive all issues, and especially the Palestinian problem as the most acute one, into the framework of one conference. Nothing but disappointment awaits us if we try to speed up the process. The Palestinians, whose leadership completely discredited itself during the Gulf crisis, will think that they are being disregarded. Israel will deny everything while the United States will feel uncomortable. I think that all parties, first of all the United States and Israel, must admit that the Palestinian question is a key one for the region. Then, through a chain of consultations and the exchange of opinions, a conference can be prepared on this question. As for a peace treaty, that is, a technical aspect of peace, this conference must initiate all other processes, such as the establishment of a collective security system in the region and the settlement of the Palestinian question. By the way, there are now all prerequisites for this purpose, and mainly because there is no longer the Iraqi war machine.

Interviewer:
Sergei Babusenko,
our own correspondent
LONDON

When secrecy pays

Lev Bezymensky

No one doubts, I am sure, the extraordinary importance of what happened in Germany late last year and of Soviet-German relations taking on a new quality as a result. The German question is one of the most sensitive spots of European and world politics and unless it is duly settled, the outlook for Europe's future will be dim. Last week, the USSR Supreme Soviet got around to this problem at last and ratified three treaties of the "package," namely the Treaty on the Final Settlement as Regards Germany on September 12, 1990; the Treaty on Good-Neighbourly Relations, Partnership and Cooperation Between the USSR and the FRG; and the Treaty on Promoting Wide-Range Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technological Cooperation (both of November 9, 1990). Two treaties concerning Soviet troops and certain transitional measures have been endorsed in principle, and their discussion will be carried on.

An ordinary procedure? Not quite, I do not see anything unusual, of course, about the fact that such important documents were submitted to parliament by Deputy Foreign Minister Kvitsinsky, an expert in the German question who had worked in Bonn for years, rather than by the Foreign Minister himself. It's good that our new Foreign Minister has no "prestigiousness complex" and believes in professional competence.

The unusual thing about the debate on Kvitsinsky's report was that it proceeded behind closed doors. Frankly, my first reaction to that was a protest. Just a few months ago our magazine came out for a broad-scale and open discussion of this question on the assumption that oppenness alone would help dispel false rumours and remove the negative attitude to the German settlement on the part of certain sections of our society (many members of the generation which had gone through World War II, above all). Instead, a veil was drawn over the discussion...

On reflection, I am beginning to change my mind about it. What would a public discussion have brought? The answer was given by Colonel Petrushenko, a member of parliament, in a Moscow paper (guess which). He warned that he would insist on non-ratification and demand the setting up of "a special commission of the USSR Supreme Soviet which would work out, along with representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, our new position at new negotiations..."

No less! Nothing of the kind had been demanded even by the US Senate when it refused, in 1919, to ratify the Treaty of Versailles and the establishment of the League of Nations. The US arrogantly took a course of isolation which it found quite difficult to come out of in the face of the Nazi threat in prewar years. And now we hear a call for new negotiations – and, what's more, not between governments, but through parliaments...

It was not only such extraordinary demands that the Colonel's article contained. The deputy accused the authors of the treaties of "consolidating the revision of World War II results, doing no small damage to the Soviet Union's foreign policy and military positions, and actually undermining its status of a great and victorious power." Unfortunately, this is not merely a "private opinion" but a viewpoint – if not a position – widely spread in military-political circles, and not only in them, for that matter. What if such accusations against the President of the USSR who signed the Treaties were made in parliament by, of all people, a representative of the very army which the President is so often and so persistently urged to lean upon?

Let us not discuss here the role colonels have had to play in the history of the 20th century. I am certain that our armed forces possess an intellectual and moral potential which is high enough to prevent them from acting as a "delayed action mine" laid under the process of Soviet society and its foreign policy changing over to a new and civilized state. Ours ought to be a great power, not one boasting of its greatness, victorious power which is not going, 50 years after the Victory, to remain an occupying power with its influence based on its troops' eternal stay on other countries' territories. We entered Germany as liberators, so should we withdraw from it as occupiers? The treaties which have been signed rule out this prospect, and one can agree with General Moiseyev, Chief of the General Staff, that "the package of treaties promotes and strengthens trust between our two countries, maintains peace and stability in Europe."

Let bygones be bygones

One can often hear that we have old scores to settle with Germany. Isn't it time we have gone over from settling old scores to a normal coexistence of the nations which do not only have quite a few bones to pick with one another but also share much in common in the context of European history, culture and civilization? Now is the time to do that. Our President and all the adherents of new thinking merit every praise for their efforts to get rid of shopworn stereotypes and to achieve a breakthrough in international relations.

We have many questions to put to today's Germany and to Germany of tomorrow, of course. Only the answers to them can be obtained not by threats of "non-ratification", but by joint work and a search for common interests. In these efforts, the two nations can draw on their experience accumulated over the ages, which has prompted the ways to effect the settlement in Germany. Let us forget about the threats uttered against Germany, and thank the deputies for sparing us the embarrassment which the ratification debate might have caused us if held in open session.

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New thinking that is no longer new

Foreign policy can be really effective only if freedom and democracy have been firmly established within the country. That is why it is time for the Soviet Union to make a final decision between "socialism" and a civilized world order. This subject was discussed in the first instalment. Wherein lie the interests of the USSR? What else is necessary to ensure success for foreign policy?

Georgy Kunadze
Cand. Sc. (History)

An effective foreign policy is impossible without the understanding of and support from the public, and this in its turn is impossible without an unbiassed and detailed account of facts in the media – facts, not merely their interpretation.

Disregarding public opinion

The Soviet media have usually published only the official interpretation of events. This was quite natural in the past because the government denied the public the right to have its own opinion, leaving it only the possibility to approve the official stand. Today, if we are not moving back to the totalitarian regime, such a state of affairs is intolerable.

Nevertheless, news of world events is still brought to us in the form of a biassed and selective commentaries. We learn from newspapers that a foreign politician "stated the well-known position" or, at best, "expressed his opinion," etc. One can often read in newspapers or hear on television the familiar phrase "matters of mutual interest were discussed."

A special role is attached to the Soviet news agency TASS, which disseminates amazingly "harmonious" and sometimes glaringly biassed features, and, of course, to television. It is not fortuitous that we are witnessing the revival of political censorship and often self-censorship on television, which is watched practically by all and everywhere, whereas alternative newspapers and magazines are accessible only to the minority, and mainly to people in major cities.

In such conditions the country's leadership can pursue its own policy without paying much attention to public opinion. I do not at all call for publishing, say, the official correspondence of the Foreign Ministry. However, I think that the Soviet public has a right to know about the country's foreign policy, its problems, possible turns and alternative variants what at least people in other countries do.

Only then will it be possible for the first time to take public opinion into account in the shaping of foreign policy, provided public opinion is established not by a tendentious selection of "letters from the working people" but through the tested mechanism of regular polls.

It is certainly difficult to suppose that an optimal foreign policy can always be pursued in keeping with the wishes of public opinion. Moreover, the burden of responsibility for decisions cannot be laid on the public. This is the duty of the political leadership. There are decisions without alternatives, and there is no avoiding them. In such cases unbiassed information is particularly necessary in order to explain the essence of the matter to the public, at least to tell it honestly why an unpopular decision has to be taken.

"Diplomats" from the Party apparatus

An essential condition for a new foreign policy is a reform of the Foreign Ministry's staff and structure. It would be unfair to complain about the lack of experienced diplomats. The aim is to release their considerable potential and enhance the degree of responsibility for the foreign-policy decisions made by the country's supreme leadership.

Despite all my appreciation of Shevardnadze's contribution, it should be admitted that he was unable to change entirely the conformism characteristic of the Foreign Ministry's staff. I do not have in mind the duty of civil servants to act within the limits of their government's policy. This is a different matter entirely. The readiness to accept and substantiate any stand of the political leadership and the ability to foresee its choice have been cultivated in the Foreign Ministry for decades.

As a result, one of the main functions of dip-

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lomacy – to give an unbiassed analysis of world politics and the country's place in it – has been lost to a considerable extent. Together with this the ability of foreign policy to achieve self-perfection has nearly disappeared as well. It is characteristic that tendentious information-analytical work is sincerely regarded by many staff members of the Foreign Ministry as a hard-and-fast rule of the game.

There are many reasons for this state of affairs, the chief among them being that Party tradition firmly entrenched in the government structures. Party "discipline," even harsher than military discipline, spread to the state apparatus as a whole. However, it affected most painfully those links of the state apparatus which, like foreign policy, were directly linked with the high Party leadership.

Yegor Ligachev, a former Politburo member, once revealed how, fighting for the oncoming perestroika in the Brezhnev period, he and his colleagues became exposed to the grave danger of... being sent as an ambassador to a remote country. He also disclosed recently that, owing to this attachment to Party work, he once declined an offer to go as ambassador to a great power. It did not even occur to Ligachev that he might not fit the diplomatic work. Nor did this thought ever enter the minds of our political leaders who strengthened the foreign policy service by such "diplomats" from the Party apparatus as Dmitry Polyansky and Pyotr Abrasimov. Many examples of this kind could be given here. It was the order of the day in our country. True, there are few instances when high Party officials proved to be good diplomats.

On the whole, diplomats from among high Party officials brought with them a spirit of unreserved compliance with any views of the leadership and intolerance of the slightest manifestation of free thinking. With the formal abolition of the Party's direct control over foreign policy the Party principles, far from weakening, have become even stronger in it. The point is that lately more Party officials have been quietly transferred to government posts, including in the Foreign Ministry.

Drawing by Igor Shein

Bringing the customs of the central Party apparatus with them and backing them by the authority of high government posts, many of these people help to affirm indirect, though no less harsh party control over foreign policy and pull it back in this way. This thesis can be illustrated by the examples of Georgy Razumovsky, Semyon Grossu and Vasily Zakharov, who were recently appointed to diplomatic posts, or Alexander Kapto, who was twice "thrown" into diplomacy. By the irony of fate (or dialectics, as some call it), if common sense prevails over dogmas and emotions among the Communists of Russia, it may happen that Ivan Polozkov (First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation) will be appointed the ambassador to a country fitting his Party rank, to France, for instance.

Incidentally, it is not only a matter of Party officials turned diplomats. Much more important is the unwritten but tough dictate of the Party's schemes of world view which tends also to dominate the minds of specialists too. It is clear, however, that, given even the ardent desire, it will never be possible to make an objective analysis of the internal and foreign policy of any modern state, say, within the framework of the theory of class struggle.

A way out of the deadlock lies in the complete depolitization of the foreign policy service, in the harsh system of determining the professional qualification of all its staff members. I am afraid that this will not become a panacea without adequate changes in the minds and psychology of our political leaders. It will not be easy to bring about such changes because today all our political leaders have come from the Party apparatus. Serious changes will apparently take much time to effect. In the meantime it is important to find courage and common sense to recognize the vital need for them.

Political absurdity

The two above-mentioned prerequisites for an effective foreign policy – understanding by the public and depolitization of the diplomatic service – are common to all democratic states. Human civilization has acquired considerable experience in this respect. It is therefore necessary to rely on this experience without going to ideological or other extremes.

The third prerequisite of an effective foreign policy is an optimal differentiation of functions and powers between the central government and republics. This is one of the manifestations of a purely Soviet problem, virtually without an analogue in world practice. Without challenging the right of any

nation or nationality of the USSR to self-determination I shall say, nevertheless, that a sovereign state, simultaneously a union of sovereign states, seems a political and logical absurdity to me. For 70-odd years we have existed as a unitary state without thinking very much about the time bomb that had been laid under the Soviet Union's foundation by its founders.

When a practical attempt was made to exercise the right of nations to sovereignty, consistently declared in all Soviet constitutions, matters came to a deadlock, and not only because part of the sovereign republics strive for independence while, as President Gorbachev put it, there is no way for them to fall apart. No fewer difficulties arise for the republics which want to preserve their sovereignty while remaining within the Union.

We are confronted here with the question of dividing powers between the central government and republics. It is clear that the powers enjoyed by the republics are different from those exercised by the central government. It is not clear, however, who must transfer powers to whom. Should the Union government transfer part of its powers to republics, or vice versa?

Since the formation of a federal state virtually begins anew it may logically be concluded that powers must be delegated from below, from republics to the central government. The republics should consciously and voluntarily waive those sovereign rights of theirs which they are going to transfer to the Union.

How might the foreign policy functions be divided? Frankly speaking, I do not have a ready answer. It is possible that the formation of a new Union government, which has proved its viability, the need for dividing the foreign policy functions will disappear in general. Whatever its state system, a country can have only one foreign policy and it should be directed from a single centre. With a set-up like this, the republics will be concerned mainly with an independent analysis of international information, primarily the information received from the Union Foreign Ministry, and with raising urgent issues.

However, nobody knows when and how the transition period will end. The transition will possibly take many years and not a new federal state but a confederation or a sort of commonwealth of nations may finally emerge. In view of this, energetic activity by republican foreign ministries seems absolutely necessary in the years to come. It may include independent collection of international information, maintenance of direct contacts with other states and between one another, and training of their own diplomatic personnel. Besides this, by agreement with the Union government, republics could hold negotiations on concrete international problems of special interest to them already now.

Such a division of foreign policy powers would certainly be mutually beneficial. The newly formed authorities of republics would believe that the central government regards them as equal partners and not as hateful rivals. They would feel the burden of state responsibility and learn to distinguish policy as the art of the possible from a policy of declarations. In its turn, the central government would be free of fears, objectively binding the freedom of its actions, that the international agreements reached by it will be rejected by some of the republics.

What is the national interest?

Whatever the regime, the aim of foreign policy as a function of the state has always been to defend its national interests. I would formulate the national interests as the provision of optimal conditions for the existence of the state. If we prove able to understand and properly assess these conditions the elaboration of an adequate foreign and internal policy will be made much easier. The last reservation seems important because, broadly speaking, the external and internal conditions of the existence of the state represent a single complex within which an impulse to some international action can be generated by internal requirements, and vice versa.

By and large, the optimal conditions for the existence of the state include:

– internal stability, the stability of state institutions, the balance of the interests of all segments of the population;

– economic prosperity, presupposing satisfaction of the material needs of the population and the ability for effective economic development;

– the moral health of the society, the belief of the people in justice, their active interest in politics and public life, the absence of national, racial and social complexes, both the inferiority and the superiority complexes;

– national security as a guarantee against any external threat to the society and the state;

– a favourable external environment understood as the absence of hostile neighbouring states or at least the prevalence of friendly and loyal states;

– a positive international image, which means an attitude of good will towards the state on the part of the world community.

All these conditions are closely interconnected. For instance, the weakening of the internal stability of the state undermines its national security, and an aggressive war erodes the moral health of the society. The list of such interconnected factors could be continued almost endlessly. However, it is clear that an ideal situation in which all conditions for the existence of the state have been ensured fully is unattainable.

It is always a matter of securing a balance of these conditions when the lack of one condition is compensated for by another. The search for the balance represents the essence of policy. It is important to remember that any action of the state is practically always accompanied by negative consequences. Policy should be reasonable, not left or right, liberal or conservative. Policy can be considered reasonable when its positive effect exceeds the sum of its negative consequences.

It should hardly be proved that an emphasis on crude force, on compulsion cannot be the long-term basis for policy. The negative consequences of such a policy soon outweigh its achievements and the regime collapses. A reservation should, however, be made here. The postwar history knows several cases in which authoritarian regimes (Taiwan, South Korea and Chile) managed to bring the conditions of their existence to a minimally acceptable balance by relying mainly on force.

It is not a coincidence that some Communist Party leaders have lately shown interest in the experience of these countries. However, this experience is not suitable for our country. First, the above-mentioned countries ruled by authoritarian regimes did not bind their economic policy by any ideological framework and were guided only by common sense and economic expediency. Second, the most odious dictatorships were much more open to the outside world than we are today. Strong authoritarian power was a means for them, not an end in itself.

The situation is different in our country. Marxist theory evidently hinders economic growth, for the bankrupt economy is an absolute norm of real socialism. Also usual for it are totalitarian instincts, much more blind and cruel than the instincts of any authoritarian

regime. In short, the dream of a strong authoritarian regime carrying out effective reforms in the economy is an illusion in our case if this regime does not find enough strength to junk worthless dogmas and practices. It will be recalled in this connection that the present political crisis in our country was provoked not by intrigues of troublemakers and populists, but by the inability of the Communist Party and its government, still enjoying power which no authoritarian regime had ever dreamt of, to implement economic changes within the context of "the only true doctrine."

Gains and losses

By the mid-1980s the Soviet Union had found itself on the verge of a crisis, perhaps most serious in its history. There were more terrible times, of course, such as collectivization and mass terror (in which only unjustified repressions were censured for some reason, as if repressions in general can be justified). All this is true. The essence of the crisis of the mid-1980s is explained not by the brutalities of the regime. The point is that the insurance of almost all the above-mentioned conditions for the existence of the country was at the lowest ever level in its history. In some respects, such as the moral health of the society, the favourable external environment and a positive international image, the country's existence had no backing whatsoever. If we add to this the depleted economy, internal stability based on lies, police surveillance, the apathy of the population, and national security which had become a hostage to a ruinous arms buildup, we begin to see how utterly hopeless the situation had become.

Great courage was required of the country's leadership to begin at last a process of change. Internal reforms have been proceeding with difficulty from the very outset, whereas in foreign policy positive results came very quickly. This can be explained by a high degree of centralization and, consequently, better conditions for its direction. Moreover, an improvement of the country's international situation depended on the correction of several serious mistakes.

The main outcome of Soviet policy over the past five years of perestroika consists in the provision of very favourable external conditions for the country's progress. National security has increased and the Soviet Union's image in the world has improved markedly. As a matter of fact, the USSR does not have conscious enemies now. On the contrary, the vast majority of countries wish perestroika success and are ready to help in implementing it. These are obvious gains.

Did the Soviet Union suffer losses? Many people, even some of the champions of perestroika, believe that there are losses too. They mention the Soviet Union's "withdrawal" from Eastern Europe as a result of which the "former enemies" are now closer to its frontiers, Moscow's unilateral measures in arms reduction, the decline of the USSR's international influence, and, lastly, "complicity" with the United States in the war against Iraq.

Today we do not have a loftier national interest than the building of a new society, a new state

These sentiments reflect an odd mixture of the ideological dogmas of Marxism and geopolitical views of the first half of the 20th century. The Soviet Union's security no longer depends on the existence of a buffer zone. Furthermore, if we are indeed ripe for pluralism, for a free competition of views we do not need a sanitary cordon on the path to "alien" ideas. In view of the incredibly immense scale of our military-industrial complex a unilateral reduction of armaments is rather a gain, than a loss.

On the whole, it seems evident that today we do not have a loftier national interest than the building of a new society, a new state. It is not easy to build a new state in any case, and it is simply impossible to do that in an unfavourable international environment. All other factors, including such traditional attributes of the foreign policy of a great power, such as the projection of its influence, economic aid to other countries, the cultivation of allies (not to be confused with friends) are of secondary importance. Complex theoretical theses are not needed for the substantiation of this conclusion. Elementary common sense is enough for this purpose.

It is a different matter that conducting a reasonable (rational) foreign policy by no means presupposes an unconditional pliability, susceptibility to the wishes of partners. Nor must such a policy conflict with our internal political and social interests. The problem of arms reduction and military détente on the whole is typical in this sense. By what should we be guided in the tackling of this problem? The answer seems to be on hand – by the principle of defence sufficiency. However, no state has ever admitted that its military potential exceeds the minimum absolutely necessary for defence. In the years of perestroika the Soviet Union has repeatedly stated that its military potential was in keeping with the principle of defence sufficiency. However, after that it announced more cuts in its armed forces. It turns out that defence sufficiency is a purely subjective thing and that quite another thing is objective.

First, the Soviet Union's military potential will unfortunately remain its only foreign policy trump card for many years to come. It will not only determine the status of the USSR as a great power but will also impel the world community to help perestroika if only according to the instinct of self-preservation.

Second, it should not be forgotten either that servicemen are a part of our society, and the most unfortunate one at that. Cuts in the armed forces and redeployment of large military units are inevitable. However, the demobilization of many servicemen without reliable social guarantees and the redeployment of troops to new places not prepared for permanent residence are further aggravating the internal crisis. The society must help the soldiers and officers released from military service or continuing to serve in the army to settle down and

to compensate them materially and morally for the years of privations at least out of the instinct of self-preservation, and not only because the servicemen have arms. Complete despair of any social group is dangerous for the society.

I do not support loud charges that our diplomats have doomed the troops withdrawn from Eastern Europe to privations and life without a roof over their heads. Major foreign policy decisions are taken by the political leadership provided they can be put into effect without material and moral damage to the citizens, servicemen included. So the government and, most of all, our system in my opinion must be made responsible for all the problems connected with the withdrawal of Soviet troops. After all, servicemen are far from being the first whom the "thoughtful" state compels to live in tents or barracks.

It seems that the small choice of foreign policy trump cards and the serious internal situation must be taken into account in determining the rate and scale of cuts in the armed forces. This process must be continued. However, like any other process, it cannot be divorced from the concrete realities of our life.

It should be remembered in this connection that arms reduction is by no means the only and principal way of achieving military détente and mutual trust, while national security does not depend only on how many tanks, missiles and aircraft we have. However, military détente is not determined only by the fact that we shall have few weapons. A considerable military potential and military détente are quite compatible on the condition that qualitative changes are effected in our armed forces, a radical military reform is carried out and, lastly, the new foreign policy is continued.

It is necessary to depoliticize the army, place it under effective civil control, rid it of unusual functions (harvesting and suppression of civilian protest), build a professional army, provide decent conditions of life and work for servicemen, and learn to be open to the world. In this case mutual trust and, together with it, military détente will be ensured. If we preserve the army in its present form, make it shoot at civilians, call up recruits by means of round-ups, and allow generals to have a decisive say in politics, no cuts in the military potential will help us to keep détente and trust. It will be the deadend of foreign policy and perestroika as a whole.

A consolatory diagnosis

Following the Moscow press conference with British Prime Minister John Major, an American correspondent I know remarked: "I get the impression that he brought some kind of a statement and didn't even leave himself time to hear the response." This may be the case. But even if there was such a statement, the press knows absolutely nothing about it.

By its short duration the visit reminded one that of a doctor: he arrived, took a look and gave a diagnosis. The guest from London was the first envoy of such a status from the West after the events in Vilnius, the end of the war in the Gulf and a certain disorder in the general Western chorus glorifying our perestoika and its leader. And here it is important who has come, what he wanted and has been able to see and, consequently, whether the diagnosis is the correct one.

The conclusions made by John Major in Moscow will affect not only Soviet-British ties, but also the development of our relations with the United States and Western Europe, or rather the determination of their attitude to us. In particular, they will influence the specification of the terms on which the West would be prepared to render us assitance in getting over the abyss that has opened wide under our feet. For it was not long ago that the East and the West declared each other partners and not enemies, but life has already put these declarations to a serious test – in Lithuania and in the Persian Gulf.

Accordingly, as far as one can make out, these two problems have become the major points of discussion during the negotiations. For they caused doubts, albeit to a different degree, regarding the position of the Soviet Union and the faithfulness of the aspirations of the Western leaders for giving it a hand in the carrying out of reforms. It was important for the British Prime Minister both to evaluate the situation firsthand and to reaffirm the continuity of the good personal contacts established by Margaret Thatcher, as well as to show the intention to play an active role in international, and in particular, in European affairs.

I see it as a very encouraging sign that in response to the disappointment and concern expresed by the British guest in connection with the developments in the Baltics, the President of the USSR did not lecture his interlocutor in the traditions of the not so distant past that it was our internal affair, but gave him quite civilized assurances that everything would be regulated in accordance with constitutional methods and mistakes did not mean a deviation from perestroika.

Well, we have to recognize the right of our former ideological opponents, whom we now want to see as our partners in the construction of the common European home, to ask such questions. Common legal space, like any other space, is not just empty words, but rather it is a notion full of meaning and the rules of cohabitation compulsory for all parties involved.

For the time being, our guest was satisfied with the response which is proved, in my view, by the fact that the European Community has announced its intention to resume interrupted aid to this country. But it is clear that if the given assurances are not to be proved by practical deeds, the confidence of the West will be forfeited for good.

As for the war in the Persian Gulf, the contradictory signals coming from Moscow at the end of February put the West on its guard. But today the West is mainly interested in Moscow's vision of the postwar system of security in the Middle East. I am sure that John Major wanted to find out whether in the future the same pro-Saddam factors, that not long ago made one see in the aggressor the victim and in the retribution the aggression, would continue to influence the USSR's behaviour in the Middle East. Evidently, this was the reason why he tried to obtain the promise that the deliveries of Soviet arms to the region, and in particular to Iraq, will be stopped. As it is known, he has been given no such promise. Nevertheless, he noted, we have come to a conclusion that this new system which is to be created should take into consideration the interests of all peoples living there.

According to the British leader, the visit has made him convinced that Gorbachev continues to be devoted to perestroika.

One would like to believe that the diagnosis is correct.

Gennady Ariyevich

Blood in downtown Belgrade

The Federation is on the brink of civil war

The Yugoslav capital, no doubt, has not been the scene of such chaos since the days of the Second World War. Smashed and looted shop windows, overturned cars, sirens of ambulances. The smell of bonfires and clouds of tear-gas. Two people were killed and over one hundred wounded. Only in the evening, when tanks rolled into the city, the streets of Belgrade became deserted.

The possibility of clashes had been predicted earlier though one could hardly have supposed that the conflict would assume such tragic dimensions.

The ball was set rolling by the decision of the leading opposition party, the Serbian Movement for Renewal (SMR), to organize in Belgrade peaceful demonstrations demanding the resignation of the officials of Belgrade television, which in the opposition's view had been giving biased and tendentious coverage of the situation in the republic. The SMR's was supported by the majority of the other opposition parties. The authorities banned the holding of the rally in the centre of the city and proposed organizing it in a specially designated location. Otherwise, warned the authorities, the organizers of the rally would be held responsible for possible disturbances.

However, the opposition gave this proposal the thumbs down. The leader of the SMR, Vuk Drasković, called upon people to storm the "tele-Bastille."

When three months ago socialists (former communists) won a landslide victory in the first multi-party elections in Serbia, the opposition claimed that this triumph would be short-lived. Drasković stated then that the victory of socialists in Serbia would have the same consequences as in Bulgaria and Romania. However, a telling defeat at the polls caused some confusion in the ranks of the opposition and some time was needed to overcome it. In addition, the aggravation of interethnic relations has objectively rallied Serbs round the republican leadership which reduced the chances of the opposition of widening its influence in the republic. And the opposition decided to be more active especially as the elections to the local governments are coming nearer and it pins great hopes on them.

As a first step the opposition demanded the resignation of the Belgrade television officials. The leaders of the opposition did not try to conceal their main goal either: removing the socialists from power. That demand was voiced by many speakers at the unauthorised rally.

As more and more people came to the streets of downtown Belgrade, the presence of the police also became more noticeable. The confrontation between the forces of law and order and the demonstrators reached its climax. It is hardly possible to find out now who was the first to provoke the clashes in which in a matter of few minutes already had involved thousands of people. The police used water-canons. Many of the rally's paticipants began to wield clubs.

Despite the appeals of the opposition leaders to exercise restraint, the crowd became unruly. A political demonstration turned into an orgy of violence and chaos. Groups of extremists smashed up shops with such zeal as if they housed the local committees of the Socialist Party. My question about what the ransacked jeweller's shops had to do with the goals of the rally remained unanswered. There is no doubt that these unruly lads did not realize that with their ransacking and looting they were also discrediting the party that called them to the rally of protest. Nor, by the way, did those who came to the "peaceful demonstration" with weapons that were partly confiscated by the police realize this either.

Along with a number of the most active demonstrators, the law enforcement authorities arrested the leader of the SMR V.Drasković accusing him of organizing the "disturbances and violence."

The bringing of troops into the city brought about a normalization of the situation. But how long is it going to last? No doubt, this step has not eliminated the contradictions between the authorities and the opposition. And today it is not yet clear whether the restoration of peace will bring the conflict from the streets and squares to the halls of the republican parliament where the forces of rocks and tear-gas will give way to the force of arguments.

Judging by information available, the actions of the opposition did not receive widespread support in other cities of the republic. And even those residents of Belgrade who happened to be in the street on that day had a different perception of what was taking place. On the central square of the city I overheard the following conversation between the two eldely men. One of them, flushed with the struggle, said: "We should do this every day, and then we shall live better." To which the other man remarked: "Then I am sure we shall not live better. If everyone takes to the street, there will be no one left to work."

A resolute disagreement with the measures taken by the authorities has been expressed by Belgrade students who stated that as far as they are concerned, the protest is not over. Judging by the night-time clashes in the ensuing days, they were telling the truth.

Gennady Sysoyev,
our own correspondent
BELGRADE

Kosovo, Belgrade. What's next? / ASS photo

HUMAN RIGHTS

The rules of the game I do not want to play

Sergei Kovalyov, a human rights champion in the sixties and the seventies, a political prisoner, and now Chairman of the Human Rights Commission under the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, on the international fraternity of officialdom he came up against in Geneva

I was invited to the 47th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, held in Geneva, as a member of the Soviet delegation led by Yuri Reshetov, Department Head of the USSR Foreign Ministry, with Professor Yuri Kolosov acting as a deputy for him during his absence. The delegation was made up of young Foreign Ministry staffers for the most part.

That was my first trip abroad in official capacity, as a member of an official Soviet delegation, and I must say that my ten-day stay in Geneva left a lasting nasty taste in my mouth. All that could have been foreseen, of course, but it is easy to be wise after the event. Only at the session did I realize what an awkward position I had found myself in.

Every delegation was regarded as a single whole, which is a perfectly sensible procedure. The statements the speakers at the session made were not looked upon as their own, but as their respective delegations' – Soviet, American, Italian... All the statements had been coordinated, i.e. they reflected not merely a consensus within a delegation, but the position of the country it represented; in other words, they had been "endorsed by the centre". Therefore, our delegation did not have much room for manoeuvre...

As a member of the deleation, I was supposed to "observe the rules of the game." However, I am also a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, and it is the latter which I, naturally, considered myself a representative of (a role not quite habitual to me), and as such, in duty bound to protect and give expression to the Russian Federation's position which by no means coincides with that of the USSR. Speaking of human rights, for instance, the central government and that of the Russian Federation are divided on the Baltic issue. Yeltsin and Gorbachev do not see eye to eye, neither do the Presidiums of the Russian Federation's and the USSR's Supreme Soviets – and the Supreme Soviets proper.

In Geneva, I was determined to spell out the Russian Federation's position and to stand firmly on it, pursuant to Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's recommendations.

As a member of the delegation I had practically no chance to do that, however. A representative of the Soviet Union – or any other country for that matter – merely reads out a prepared text, agreed upon in advance, and then hands it over to the Secretariat. He may, of course, deviate from the text, make comments on it, or even set it forth in his own words. No one will stop me, but my own rendering of the text and my private remarks will not be included either in the official statement, or in the resume of the latter. So what could I do about it?

I didn't think it morally right to forget that I was a delegate from the Russian Federation or to forget all about my personal point of view. After all, I had taken part in working out the Presidium's position...

Item 12: an acid test

The discussion of what had happened in the Baltics in January came under Item No. 12 of the session's agenda, which has to do with human rights abuses anywhere on the globe. Each delegation is expected to offer the arguments and to cite the facts it believes to be of utmost importance. At the session, the discussion of Item No. 12 of the agenda was accompanied by mutual reproaches and caustic remarks.

The Soviet delegation prepared its statement on the human rights issue in advance. Having explained the specific nature of the position I had found myself in at the session, I suggested that the statement should include a small insert by me setting forth, in brief, the Russian Federation's stand on the issue, and pointing out that some other Republics had also taken a view different from that of the Centre.

In a talk with the leaders of the delegation I insisted that the Soviet statement should set forth the Russian Federation's position as fully as possible, just for the session participants' information.

My past experience told me that this request would hardly be granted literally, if at all. Therefore, I took other steps without concealing them from the other members of the delegation. I asked representatives from Byelorussia which has an observer's status in the UN Commission for Human Rights this year, and from the Ukraine, which is now among the 43 member-states, to mention the Russian Federation's stand in their statements related to Item No. 12 of the agenda. I knew that the Ukraine's stand on the issue of the Baltics was rather close to, even though not quite as clear-cut as ours. In both cases, however, my requests were politely denied...

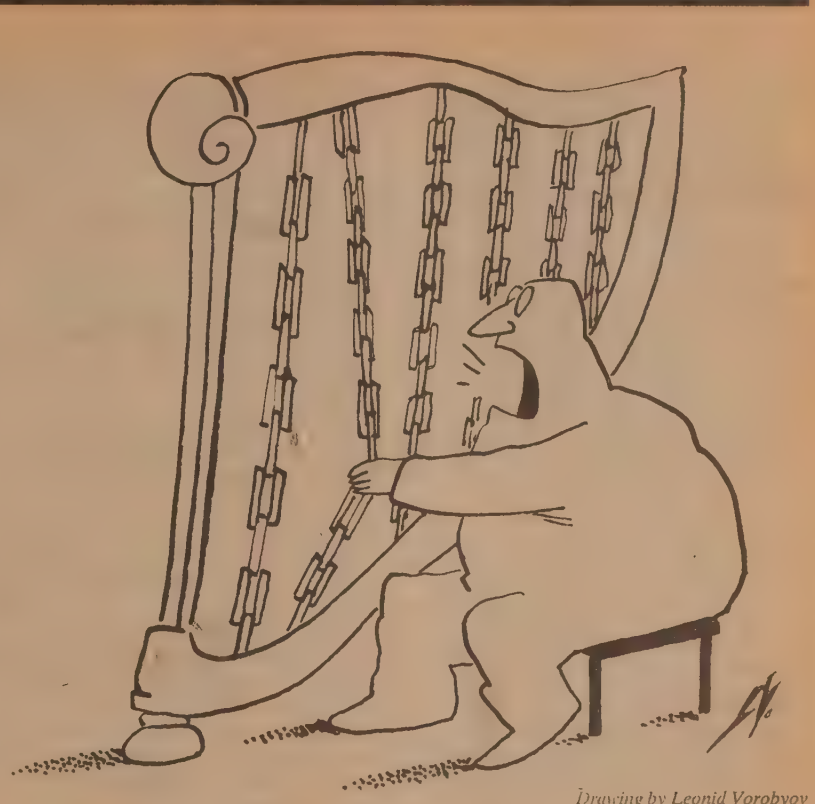
Then I approached the representatives of the non-government organization which our human rights activists maintain the closest contacts with – Amnesty International. The non-government organizations like Amnesty with a consultative status at the United Nations have only a deliberative vote in the UN Commission on Human Rights; nevertheless, they regularly report to the Commission, and their opinions are heeded. I explained to the delegation of Amnesty International the difference between the Russian Federation's and the USSR's stands on the issue of the Baltic Republics and asked the AI delegates to convey this information to the session, submitted all the documents to them, and allowed them to refer to me as the source but not in my official capacity of a member of the Soviet delegation because I was prompted to act in this way by my personal sense of duty and by my position of a member of Parliament of the Russian Federation.

Later, I heard out Amnesty's report with keen attention. It didn't say as much as a word about the situation in the Baltics – and in the USSR in general...

Although the position of Amnesty International disapointed me, it can be explained. Amnesty is opening its office in Moscow, and naturally wants to be in our authorities' good books... What's more, I know other human rights organizations which sent their experts to the Baltic Republics in order to gather evidence against Lithuanian and Latvian "nationalists."

This is not to say that the resolutions adopted by the Baltic Republics' parliaments are irreproachable from the angle of human rights. But committing legal errors is one thing, and shooting unarmed civilians to death is another. This action committed by the central government in Lithuania and Latvia is out of all proportion to what the latter's authorities may have done wrong.

The Western human rights activists' behaviour is largely explained by the fact that the educated West does not approve of nationalism and separatism, in principle. Besides, the shock of getting disappointed with the leader of perestroika, and of all the hopes being dashed to the ground, is not easy to recover from.



Drawing by Leonid Vorobyov

The criticism Moscow accepts

The Soviet delegation was not in a hurry to speak up on Item No. 12. The procedure gives every country the right to respond if it is mentioned in a statement, but it is more convenient to temporize and to take one's cue from other speakers. Besides, the delegation obviously proposed to coordinate with Moscow its responses to likely criticisms.

The Baltic Republics were mentioned quite frequently at the session. The Swedish delegation was particularly active. The Americans came up with lengthy and hard-hitting statements condemning in no uncertain terms, the USSR government's actions in the Baltics. They reminded the session that the USA still did recognize the Baltics having been made part of the USSR... The Soviet delegation was displeased with that statement, referred to it as untimely and ungentlemanlike. In the meantime, lobby discussions were on concerning the form in which the commission was to react to the bloodshed in Vilnius.

The options open to the Commission were as follows. First, not to mention the Blatics in a single document of the Commission. Although most desirable to the Soviet delegation, this option was the least likely one... Second: to adopt a special resolution. Naturally, my colleagues were opposed to that. If a resolution is adopted, it is certain to come up at the next session which will inquire about changes in the situation, if any; besides, the resolution may contain the demand that state should explain itself... And third: not to adopt a resolution, but to have the Chairman of the Session make a statement. This is considered to be a most favourable outcome under the circumstances.

It looked as if Moscow was prepared, in case the Chairman made a statement, to instruct the delegation not to make a formal protest, i.e. not to vote "against."

In the end, "quiet diplomacy" prevailed. In its statment on Item No. 12, the Soviet delegation did not say a word about the Baltics – for the simple reason that the West had kept mum, too. In his statement, the Chairman voiced his "concern over the tragical events" and took note of the Soviet government's promise to inform the Chairman (but not the Commission!) about the results of an inquiry.

Jails viewed from a "positive angle"

I arrived in Geneva just in time for the discussion of Item No. 10 of the agenda which had directly to do with torture. There is the International Anti-Torture Convention which

many countries, including the Soviet Union, have acceded to. Its observance is supervised by the Committee Against Torture composed of ten experts.

I was asked to speak for the Soviet delegation on Item No. 10. The delegation member in charge of that issue prepared a draft and agreed upon all the other statements with the leadership of the delegation, and I was supposed to edit the draft and state my case in it.

The introduction submitted to me boiled down to questions of procedure: how to divide powers between the UN speaker on torture and the Committee. I decided to leave this part of the statement unchanged, on the whole, except for a few slight corrections of its wording, but to include into my statement a review of the situation in our penitentiary system. I knew what I was going to talk about.

So I drafted my statement and, in turn, asked my colleagues to edit it. A substantial proportion of my text was approved, but the diplomat responsible for this subject suggested that I should "present the negative aspects of the situation from a positive angle." His meaning was approximately as follows: I was to shift the emphasis from the fact that the treatment of prisoners in our jails was no better than a continuous torture to our determination to remove whatever discomforts the inmates of our prisons still have to bear. There were objective difficulties in the way of this effort, however...

Such objective difficulties do exist, to be sure. Ironically as it may sound in this context, the country is short of jails, and we must build new ones in a hurry. By our monstrous standards, prisons allow two square metres of cell space per prisoner, but actually prison cells are packed even tighter than that. As a result, tuberculosis is now rampant in our places of confinement. The cells reserved for TB cases are overcrowded – and the number of such cells has increased, as I had occasion to see during a recent inspection tour.

Be that as it may, the text was given a "positive twist," and I read it out.

Each of such texts is then reduced to a synopsis for publication. In my case, the synopsis consisted of three phrases about the procedural mechanisms and one phrase about the situation in our prisons. The latter phrase, again, presented things from a "positive angle"...

I am not attributing this to the pains taken by the delegation. Not at all. Rather, this can be described as the international fraternity of officialdom in action.

To put it bluntly, the United Nations' specialised agencies concerned with human rights are a preserve of international bureaucrats who have long found a common language. Decision-making and interaction mechanisms have been adjusted to perfection, and lobbying – or rather shameless bargaining – is common. I am not being biassed: such interaction is natural and even necessary. The audience understands the "diplomatic code" worked out by the United Nations and has learned to read every word and every intonation. Therefore, even the vague assessments and opinions voiced in the United Nations are not left altogether unnoticed.

I can also understand the complexity of the delicate problem of preventing interference in any state's internal affairs; polite pressure must be applied to have the "offender" take certain action to remedy the situation without provoking an angry reaction.

Nevertheless, this is a feebly and inefficient mechanism. Its chief organic shortcoming is that interacting within its framework are state delegations, state representatives; there are no supranational structures, with international non-government organizations having a consultative status only. And state officials worth their salt will always look after state interests. As a result, what happens in the Commission is a conflict of state interests. There is no agency that would concern itself exclusively with the interests of law rather than with the interests of the USSR, the USA, India or Colombia. Although every delegation swears it is committed to the interests of law alone, actually this is not so. And this is the main trouble.

Cracking the diplomatic code

In the early seventies, Andrei Sakharov suggested the establishment in the UN system of a supranational body the elected members of which would act on their own rather than any government's behalf. Their candidatures would be offered not but states, as is the case when forming UN centres and services, for instance; those would be people elected, irrespective of their citizenship, from among authorities commanding international recognition. Such a body, as Sakharov visualized it, should not possess any executive functions or administrative powers. Although a strictly consultative body, it would be authorized to consider any problems, and its conclusions would be binding upon the UN and those states mentioned in them. The conclusions are to be published not only in the relevant international UN bulletins, but in the papers of the countries guilty of human rights abuses. A government may not agree with the recommendations suggested to it, but it will be obliged to make them – and its argumented reply – public.

And although the resolutions adopted by such a body would be of a moral nature only, they would rule out backstage bargaining and compromises of interstate interests.

Sakharov had put forward this idea at an entirely different time and in an entirely different situation when the establishment of such a mechanism would be of truly enormous importance. At that time, in the seventies, Western government circles, much better informed than other strata of society, were most reserved in their reaction to human rights violations in socialist countries. This went on until the public intervened... To be specific, events developed in the following sequence.

There appeared here, in the USSR, some strange characters whom some called human rights champions and others, dissidents. To Western conservative intellectuals, there was nothing new about their statements; what's more their calls sounded too mild to those intellectuals who had made more radical calls themselves, and even went as far as demanding an end to Bolshevism... As to the liberal Western intellectuals (Left-wing ones, to be precise) their attitude to the Soviet human rights activists was that of ill-concealed irritation and discontent. Later, by force of objectivity characteristic of them, they started to take a closer look at what was going behind the Iron Curtain. Soviet problems began to make much more difference to Western public opinion and gradually Western governments, who could no longer ignore those problems, began to build up pressure on Soviet authorities.

In the seventies the supranational human rights agency suggested by Sakharov could expedite the processes then under way in the West and in the East and remove the "frontier barrier." Now, too, it is too early to dismiss this idea as outdated, I think, and it would be too optimistic to rely on our newly acquired freedom of information... In the sphere of mass media those who would like either to reverse the process of change, or to find a new balance, still haven't lost their ability to do so. Therefore, the international mechanism suggested by Sakharov could still serve as a factor of stability and as a means of preventing regress. ■

A gun sparks off opposition

Sergei Olesin

As soon as the roar of armoured troop carriers in Tiananmen square (June 1989) died down, the leaders of China faced the inevitable consequence of military violence – an irreconcilable opposition

This is something new in the history of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The traditional political doctrines originating in ancient Confucian treatises put a sign of equality between resistance to the state and national treachery. The history of the Communist Party of China (CPC) has known a countless number of "deviations," "factions", "groups" and even palace revolutions (the case of Lin Biao in 1971, the overthrow of the Four in 1976). But all this was within the apparatus struggle for power and did not threaten the foundations of the edifice of the State.

Reformers under General Secretary

The reforms and the open door policy launched beginning in the late 1970s put on the country's key posts people of the new intellectual generation. Usually their service record was determined not by a list of successfully held posts in the apparatus, but by books, scientific ideas, topical and innovatory publications. In the first place the reform needed not grandmasters in apparatus games and eminences grises – they have already acknowledged their inability to feed the country, but highly-competent people and intellectuals with civic responsibility capable of suggesting and carrying out non-trivial decisions.

It is precisely on these and their vision of China's future that reformers in the higher echelon of the party leadership – Hu Yaobang, General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee, and Zhao Ziyang who replaced him on this post counted on and relied to a large extent. Under these General Secretaries the role of scientists and intellectuals in making political decisions was enhanced considerably, science began making headway towards achieving a status worthy of it in a modernizing country. However, when with the evolution of the reform the principle mainstays of "the communist Celestial Empire" and together with them the real political domination of Chinese partocracy were

called in question, the latter did everything in its power to protect its interests. In 1987 it made Hu Yaobang resign, bringing back to the key posts conservative figures. And in 1989 when students and intellectuals went out into the street the question for partocrats was: "yes" or "no" to their unlimited power in the country. They had nowhere to retreat, so the reformers who formed a group led by Zhao Ziyang were taught an unforgettable "lesson". The illusions regarding the possibilities of improving the region from the inside were crushed by tanks.

There were different ways that made many figures of the democratic movement emigrate. Some of them left for other countries even before the events in June, realizing the hopelessness of their actions within the system. Now it is obvious that by so doing they avoided arrests and persecutions. Others fled from the country illegally. If they managed to get money they bought foreign passports (even today they are popular in the black market of China). Many of them were helped by foreign friends who hid and took people away in their cars and cargo containers.

Intellectuals in emigration

Now the Chinese communist establishment is withstood by opposition emigré organizations whose aim is to eliminate the backbone of the PRC political system – the one-communist dictatorship.

The Front of Democratic China (FDC), the largest and most active of these organizations, was founded in Paris by some 150 post-June emigrants. Apart from France (where Deng Xiaoping started his political career early in the 20th century), organizations of the Chinese opposition have already been set up in the US, Japan and Australia. Most of them declared their membership in the FDC; some intend to act on their own. The All-American conference of Chinese students and scientists was held in Chicago in the summer of 1989. It was attended by the representatives of 40,000 Chinese studying and working on probation in different educational centres of the US. Students, the hope of China and its future strongly criticized their government.

The FDC in Paris was organized and headed by people who became popular throughout China in the course of the Decade of reforms or during the violent events of the spring and summer of 1989. FDC Chairman Yang Jiagi is a well-known Chinese political scientist, a resolute supporter of the multiparty system, of division of powers and a law-governed parliamentary state. His associates Su Shaozhi, ex-director of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism and the Ideas of Mao Zedong under the CPC Central Committee, the author of the conception "the initial stage of socialism" in China; Chen Yizi, one of the main strategists of the economic reform in the PRC, who till June 1989 was leader of the reform brain centre under the State Council of the PRC. All the three are members of Zhao Ziyang's closest intellectual entourage, the trusted political advisers to the former CPC General Secretary who was relieved of his post in 1989, being accused of connivance with "bourgeois liberalism."

Among the young leaders of the FDC are Wu Erkaixi, active member in the student movement, and Wan Runnan, former director general of the Chinese electronic company Stone.

Other intellectual and political figures of the emigré opposition are world-known Chinese dissident, astrophysicist and academician Fang Lizhi, Nobel Prize winner for public activity and protection of human rights in China.

To a certain extent these people represent the basic social components of the emigré opposition – humanitarian and technical intelligentsia, students, the representatives of new business circle. The old Chinese emigration – huaqiao communities that have become long established in many countries – render great moral and financial support to post-June emigration.

The list of rather high state and party posts held in the past by the present members of the opposition shows that political and ideological demarcation in Chinese society has gone too far. In this connection I can't help making a "nomenklatura" comparison. Soviet dissidents of the 1970s–80s in the West did not have among their midst former members of the Central Committee and advisers to the General Secretary. The former high status of the opposition members in the party and the state apparat shows that in Chinese establishment and in society there existed and still exist representative political forces which do not share the official policy of the CPC and the PRC leaders, and that the new wave of emigration has an undoubtful social foothold inside the country.

What is the political credo of Chinese opposition members, their immediate and long-term political aims? The programme document of the FDC formulates them as follows: "peace, non-violence, elimination of the one-party dictatorship." The immediate aim is struggle to bring back to power "groups of reformers" associated with the name of Zhao Ziyang, the establishment of an opposition political party in China, the holding of radical political and socio-economic transformations. At the same time, the opposition leaders stress in particular that the Front does not advance the slogan "Down with the CPC" but only insists that it should renounce the role of being the only ruling party.

The opposition believes that the "mixed planning and market economy" concept underlying the programme of reforms in China, is not viable and is theoretically erroneous, which led the economy to a crisis.

According to opposition, the utmost social-economic model of China's progress demands that the right to

Drawing by Dmitry Moskin

the existence and development of private property be recognized. Without this, the Front leaders maintain, the economic and social progress of the country is impossible.

Difficulties for Beijing

The existence of an organized, though not numerous, opposition abroad arouses irritation in Beijing. Alreadly today the opposition creates foreign policy difficulties for the PRC.

First, the existence of a Chinese emigré lobby in the West, although its statements are not so pronounced, prevents the strengthening of political contacts between Western countries and leaders of China. The "human rights in China" theme has been firmly built into the Western foreign policy system, demanding from any politician punctiliousness and cautiousness in his contacts with Beijing leaders.

Second, the activity of Chinese emigration objectively leads to a reduction of a not so generous and cautious flow of Western investments in the Chinese economy.

Third, Beijing has been facing ever more acutely the problem of students and specialists undergoing training in the West, who make up most valuable element of a modernizing country but, on the whole, treat with sympathy the emigré movement and its political ideals.

Finally, Chinese emigration enjoys substantial backing in Taiwan and Hong Kong, making the plans of the reunification of these territories with continental China more complicated.

But no matter how unpleasant these foreign policy consequences are for Beijing, the regime faces its main problems inside the country. A large-scale political purge swept the whole country. It included "self-accounts" and "information" of communists about the conduct (of their own and their colleagues) during the events in the spring and summer of 1989. The persecutions of activists continue and the frontier control has been enhanced.

Intellectuals – many writers, artists and scientists – found themselves in internal opposition. Politically active students and intellectuals react keenly to the democratic changes in Eastern Europe. On the other hand, the press and television of China, whose leading staff has been cardinally renewed, are full of ideological images of the Maoist past; such as the exemplary and high-principled soldier Lei Feng, the labour spirit of Daqing. Asserted once again are the unshakeable "four principles" – socialist road, dictatorship of the proletariat, the leadership of the communist party, Marxism-Leninism and the ideas of Mao Zedong.

The army too is a matter of concern to the Centre. In the years of the reform it became less "peasant," more competent and mature politically. In April 1990 the Military Council of the CPC Central Committee made a new reshuffle of the commanders in the key military districts. The Hong Kong press reported on the disclosure of clandestine organizations and groups among the officers of the Beijing military district, about the tsaofans circulated in the army units, directed against Yang Shangkun and other military leaders, about the purge of disloyal regiment and division commanders.

Files have been opened

Opposition organizations are going through the whole traditional bunch of "infantile disorders" of any political emigration: lack of money, struggle of individuals and groups for power, problems of adaptation in the West. Different people went to go to the West and their behaviour also varies: some show adherence to principles in their struggle, others strive to convert their political capital into hard currency.

Is it possible for forces of the foreign opposition to influence spiritually the events taking place in China? One can judge this rather by indirect signs as, for example, the tense atmosphere in which the party press continues to give a good dressing down to present opposition members, proclaimed by them when they used to be the country's leading ideologist. Legally condified pluralism, consistent division of party and state functions, the multiple forms of ownership, enacted by law, supremacy of the law over party mandate – all these slogans are now recognized as "bourgeois-liberal" sedition and heresy against which one must wage an uncomprimising struggle.

And this struggle is going on. The foreign opposition, Yan Jiaqi and his supporters have been charged with all possible and impossible political sins, including "bourgeois liberalism," "indiscriminate westernization of China," betrayal of national interests and self-seeking ambitions. Individuals too were criticized. The files were opened and it turned out that all present opposition members had in the past dipped their hands into the pocket of the state, had fixed up their relatives in cushy jobs, had striven for more often and longer travels abroad... How could Zhao Ziyang take them on as political advisers?

The contacts of the opposition members with Taiwan serve as special irritants. For Bijing cooperation with the Kuomintang regime is the most striking proof of national betrayal by opposition members. Despite this, the attitude towards Taiwan among intellectuals and in all of society has greatly changed. The island has since long been regarded as materialized "prosperity" rather than an ideologicla bugaboo.

What is the attitude of the outside world towards the activity of Chinese emigration? It differs and, naturally, depends to a large extent on the condition of contacts of various countries with the people's Republic of China on a state level. France gave the greatest humanitarian support to the Chinese emigration. The bulk of political refugees were given shelter there. The actions of France immediately aroused the absolute dissatisfaction of the Chinese authorities, expressed by them in a rather sharp form.

Despite its sanctions against China, adopted in June, 1989, Washington's backing of emigrants was less resolute; the relations with China are still an object of polemics between the President and Congress. According to Yan Jiaqi, Americans in their approach to the Chinese events are afraid to infringe their economic and strategic interests and, as regards human rights in China, the US Administration is making a compromise.

The US approach to human rights in the Soviet Union is traditionally tougher than the stand regarding China.

The situation the Soviet Union found itself in is still more delicate. Official Moscow keeps silence, not interfering in internal affairs. The Left-wing forces, including a number of MPs, back Chinese students and criticize Beijing, and also their Foreign Ministry, for inconsistency in upholding the humane principles towards China. The speech by Andrei Sakharov at the first Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR had wide repercussions in the Soviet Union and far beyond it. He demanded that the Soviet ambassador be recalled from Beijing. There also echoed a hunger strike staged as a sign of solidarity of Soviet students to mark the anniversary of Beijing events, and a demonstration of protest arranged near the building of the Foreign Ministry of the USSR during Li Peng's visit to Moscow in April 1990.

As regards the Chinese opposition organizations abroad, few people in our country know, and very little at that, about their existence. These organizations are quite real forces which have made themselves known on the political stage of China spontaneously but still powerfully. Their stands and objectives, even though they are not yet firmly established and clearly understood, in many respects are consonant with the sentiments of the Left-wingers on the Soviet political arena.

FROM THE XXth CENTURY POLITICAL THOUGHT

Introduced by *New Times* analyst **Rostislav Zolotaryov**

Michael Harrington, noted American sociologist, Left-wing liberal political journalist and politician, remained to the end of his days an adherent to the socialist ideal and never lost faith in the prospect of democratic socialism being carried on into the 21st century. Michael Harrington decided on socialism as his social ideal back in his youth under the influence of "patriarches" of socialism like Norman Thomas. He took part in anti-war marches and was active in youth socialist organizations. One of the founders of the New York Young Socialist League in 1954 he later became a co-chairman of the American Democraic Socialists Party. Shortly afterwards, Michael, Harrington gained prominence in the Socialist International.

All through his active live he was in the forefront of America's political scene which found its reflection in a number of his books which made quite a stir in the sixties, including *The Other America* (1963). This work attracted the attention of the brothers Kennedy and their political heirs and was largely responsible for the "war on poverty" programme in the United States.

In the late sixties, Michael Harrington turned to science and political journalism. In 1972, he came up with the fundamental treaties called Socialism which shed new light on Marx as a theoretician of social democracy. According to Harrington, Karl Marx was not a radical revolutionary but rather an evolutionist – if not like E. Bernstein with his famous formula "the ultimate aim is nothing, movement is everything," then like Karl Kautsky, at least (a most vulnerable view). In particular, Michael Harrington claimed that the famous theory of five social formations, set forth in the *Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy* was just a hypothesis which Karl Marx himself abandoned later. This is horrible heresy from the viewpoint of dogmatic historical materialism... However, a thorough analysis of Harrington's works like *The Twilight of Capitalism* (1976), *The Next America: The Decline and Rise of the U.S.* (1981), *The Next Left* (1987), etc., confirms the objectivity of the prominent American thinker's assessment of socialism's past and his sober-minded view of it's future. These are the chief merits of Michael Harrington's last book *Socialism: Past and Future* (1989) – his spiritual testament which, in the period following the "Reagan revolution", elaborated on the ideas outlined in the book *Socialism.*

Contrary to the theories of old, Harrington maintains, socialism is not an inevitability, not a social system which is bound to prevail in the 21st century. No one can guarantee that, unless socialism continues to adapt itself to ever changing social and economic structures, taking into account capitalism's ability to carry out progressive social innovations using the "secrets of socialized labour." Capitalism discovered that the way out of crisis lay in mass-producing consumer goods, in making society "consumer-oriented." Such a society is not merely a result of socialist (liberal) way of thinking but a function of a stage in capitalist socialization marked by new forms of collective work ("Fordism"), and then in real socialization effected under democratic control as a prime condition not only of economic progress, but of human survival in general. Such control is incompatible with "dictatorial collectivism," with Stalin's antisocialist "socialism."

It is only democratic socialism that can put the process of modern socialism under the control of the people who are free to express their will.

As a political realist the likes of whom are far from common in the US social thought, Michael Harrington stated that the socialist movement, as it is today, is not as yet prepared to accomplish this mission, that it will be able to live up to the hopes pinned on it only after it jettisons the ballast of its past mistakes.

Today we give our readers the chance to acquaint yourself with scientific conclusions and bold hypotheses set forth in Michael Harrington's book Socialism: Past and Future (1989) which has not yet been printed in this country.

Prepared for publication by
Yuri Demchenko,
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On Socialism

Michael Harrington (1928–1989)

Socialism, I want to propose, is the hope for human freedom and justice under the unprecedented conditions of life that humanity will face in the twenty-first century.

Socialism? The hollow memory of a passionate youth, a youth that took place a hundred years ago? How can a nostalgic irrelevance be the precondition of anything?

There are societies resolutely dedicated to the suppression of freedom as a precondition of their continued existence – class societies stratified according to principles of inequality – that proclaim themselves to be socialist. And that is an even more decisive rejection of any necessary link between socialism and freedom and justice than the inability of the Western socialists to conceptualize – not to mention achieve – their goals...

The political impulse and movement represented by those bewildered, half-exhausted democratic-socialist parties continue to be the major hope for freedom and justice. Even now there are tentative attempts within those parties to define a new socialism. If there were not, this book would be impossible, the mere imaginings of an isolated individual.

In thus basing my hopes on the existing socialist movements, I am not going back to the absurd dogma that socialism is the wave of the future, the inevitable mode of social organization in the twenty-first century. There is no guarantee that socialism will triumph – or that freedom and justice, even to the limited degree that they have been achieved until now, will service the next century. All I claim here is that, if they are to survive, the socialist movement will be a critical factor. This is not one more study of Karl Marx or of Marxism. I have already written two volumes showing that the unknown Karl Marx was a revolutionary, democratic socialist; and that his methodology has been caricatured to the point of absurdity by so-called Marxists almost as much as by anti-Marxists. But I do not want to go into these matters again. I will, of course, refer often to Marx and his tradition, particularly in

the first part of this book. An analysis of socialism that ignored him would be like the proverbial interpretation of Hamlet without the prince. The fate of human freedom and justice depends upon social and economic structures.

That radical proposition about the future is in some way based on a conservative cliché about the past. More precisely, it relates to an insight that was shared historically by John Locke, Adam Smith, and Karl Marx. For all the celebrants of the magnificent accomplishments of capitalism – most emphatically including the socialist celebrants, like Marx – understood that there was a connection between social structure, freedom, and justice...

In most democraic countries, universal democratic rights were not won – for workers, women, for blacks in the United States – until well into the twentieth century (in America, 1965). Established power did everything it could to frustrate the possibilities it had open up, while the "rabble," often with middle-class allies, became the civilizing force.

My hypothesis, then, has become slightly more nuanced, focusing on the possible political outcomes of economic and social structural change, but it has still not departed from the great consensus of the Western Right and Left on the way in which capitalism was an essential element in the growth of freedom and justice.

The fate of human freedom and justice depends upon social and economic structures

The only unusual aspect of this cliché is that I suggest that it may well apply to the future as well as to the past. That is clearly a critical distinction. Most people who repeat the standard history I have just recited do not ask themselves whether the same kind of relationship between social, economic, and political structure might apply in the midst of the present transition, a moment more radical with regard to the conditions of human life than anything that occurred in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

All of which brings me to my third hypothesis: the revolution we are now living through is creating a social and political environment that, if it is not subject to democratic control from below, will subvert the possibilities of freedom and justice that capitalism did so much – if reluctantly – to foster...

In the standard Western (and particularly conservative) version of the Russian Revolution,it was the work of a disciplined and monolithic party, a coup d'etat behind the backs of the people. Again, an extreme simplification. Lenin had indeed tried to create a centralized and tightly controlled party, but in 1917 the Bolsheviks seethed with debate and disagreement, and he repeatedly had to fight against internal opposition for his point of view. In October on the eve of the Revolution itself, Kamenev and Zinoviev, two of the prominent Bolsheviks who thought that an insurrection would be adventurist, publicly revealed the plans for an uprising in the press. Lenin could not even win an expulsion vote for this egregious breach of discipline.

The idea of the Soviet was not simply a Russian invention. It had its intellectual origins in Saint-Simon's vision of a society that would be ruled by functional, industry-based groups. There had been anarcho-syndicalists in Spain, members of the Industrial Workers of the World and followers of Daniel De Leon in the United States, and Guild Socialists in Britain who had developed very similar concepts.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks had assumed that the European revolution would quickly save the Soviets from the contradictions that made a socialist revolution possible in a country not yet ready for socialism. So Lenin wrote in 1920, "soon after the victory of the proletarian revolution in at least one of the advanced countries, a sharp change will probably come about: Russia will cease to be the model and will once again become a backward country (in the 'Soviet' and the socialist sense)." But the European revolution did not come, and Lenin was now reduced to maneuvering within constraints that damaged his basic purposes.

At the same time, there was civil war from internal minorities financed by foreign capital and aided by foreign military intervention. Under siege, the Bolsheviks defended themselves by a regime of "War Communism," which involved confiscating the surplus of the peasants to feed cities and the army. Meanwhile, the militant workers were decimated on the front lines of the war – the proletariat, Lenin said, was "declassed" – and those who stayed behind proved incapable of managing industries that had been nationalized out of euphoria rather than on the basis of a plan. By the time the foreign invaders had been driven from Soviet soil, the economy was in a shambles, and it was clear that Lenin no longer had a majority, or anything like it. Yet he continued to rule, as the "dictatorship of the proletariat" turned into the dictatorship of the majority of the Bolshevik Party.

Having made a bloc with Bukharin and defeated Trotsky in the name of a Leninist defense of peasant interests, Stalin soon adopted a policy of exploiting those peasants that made the Trotskyist policies seem humane and moderate. He had indeed found a way to carry out a remarkable industrialization in the course of a decade by bringing totalitarian force to bear on the peasants and workers, on the social classes that supposedly dominated the society. As a book written under Stalin's personal direction was later to say with surprising candor, this was a "revolution from above." In the process, he would not simply define, but create the reality of, a "socialism" whose basic structures persist to this day even if they are no longer as grossly cruel as his era.

Between 1929 and 1934, the Soviet peasantry was forced into collective farms. There was a civil war against the people of the countryside that Stalin himself, in a conversation with Churchill, was later to compare with the devastation of the fight against the Nazi invasion. At the height of this process, Stalin announced that the rich peasants who had cooperated with NEP were to be "liquidated as a class"; individuals could be executed for pilfering small amounts of food from the collective farms; grain was exported to get hard currency to buy capital goods abroad even though people were starving; and angry peasants destroyed livestock in retaliation. The famine of 1932–33, which was a direct consequence of these policies, took five million lives, and another five million were lost before and after that tragedy; more than half of the horses and two thirds of the sheep and goats in the country were slaughtered.

There was a grim rationality in all of this and it was Stalin's resolution of the debates of the twenties. The peasants were forced to deliver their grain to the state at prices that sometimes did not even cover the cost of production. The government then sold that grain to its own nationalized industries at a much higher price and with a large "turnover tax" on the transaction. The profits made in this way were then supposed to fund a good part of the industrialization effort. However one resolves the scholarly debate over the economic effectiveness of this policy, the labor and hunger of Soviet peasants were indeed a major source of "primitive accumulation" to a decree that Trotsky found shocking...

There were, of course, momentous changes in the post-Stalin era, and they are accelerating under Mikhail Gorbachev even at this writing. But the essential, from the point of view of the very concept of socialism, was put in place by Stalin.

Socialism, as defined in Soviet practice, was a bureaucratically

controlled and planned nationalized economy that carried out the function of "primitive accumulation" and thus achieved rapid modernization. The state owned the means of production, which made some people think it must be socialist; but the Party and bureaucracy "owned" the state by virtue of a dictatorial monopoly of political power. Such a situation was a moral disaster for socialism, the corruption of the idea from within, a "fase brother" with a superficially plausible claim to authenticity. Thus, even a sophisticated analyst like Isaac Deutscher – who had been a leading Polish Trotskyist – concluded that Stalinism was a barbarous way of moving toward socialsm, much as the French Revolution had carried out a progressive historic task in a bloody, dictatorial fashion. But that is to miss the critical difference between a bourgeois revolution, of the kind that took place in France in 1789, and a socialist transformation as imagined not only by Marx but by almost every socialist. Capitalism does not need the conscious participation of the people in order to make its revolution, but that participation is, as Rosa Luxemburg so well understood, the very substance, the heart and soul, of socialism.

Marx helps answer that question. His economic analysis of India (and, by extension, of the colonial world) was, we have seen, fundamentally flawed. His political and moral judgments were not. British imperialism, he argued, was "progressive" in India in the specific sense that it shattered the coherent, complacent poverty of that country and opened up the possibility of the masses winning a decent life for all. That same "progressive" imperialism, Marx continued, was criminal and he sided with the Indians against the colonialist modernizer. That which genetically explains a social phenomenon, Marx understood, does not ethically justify it. Similarly, to the extent that the authoritarian accumulation of capital in the Third World "works" – that the Soviet Union has become a modern, if problematic, economy with a much higher standard of living than before Stalin – there was progress and it can be built upon. But it was accomplished by exploitation, violence, starvation, and murder, and the post-Stalin society has institutionalized the authoritarianism of life process, even if in a much ameliorated form. There were, alas, many intellectuals in the First World who simply looked at the statistics, ignored the crimes, and concluded that this progress was "socialist."

The complex truth is that antidemocratic collectivization is historically explicable but not thereby historically justified as "socialist." In part, it was forced to its excesses by "necessities" created by Western capitalism, but it was, at the same time, a functional equivalent of that capitalism, a new mode of exploitation and not of liberation. That one can sympathize with the revolutionaries who had to deal with these intolerable limits is true enough. That one can call their revolutions "socialist" is utterly false.

But then the new socialism cannot focus simply on advanced capitalism and the Third World. At the century's end Communist societies are in the process of basic change. There are, we will see superficial analyses of this process that interpret every departure from the centralized planning and control of the Stalin era as a step toward "capitalism." That is the result of a simpleminded dichotomy – capitalism or socialism – which misses a crucial possibility of the twenty-first century: an undemocratic and conscious collectivization that is neither capitalist nor socialist. The Communist societies have already taken steps along that road. But it is at least possible that development within the framework of a command economy eventually generates the possibility of democratization of structures that have been collectivized from on high. If that happens, the democratic-socialist dialogue with new forces within Communist society will be a critically important dimension of the future.

Finally, in thus outlining of tasks of a twenty-first-century socialism that arise out of an analysis of the failures and successes of the twentieth-century movement, I do not want to suggest some kind of imminent apocalypse. Far from it. If the first half of this book has demonstrated any one proposition, it is that socialist transformation is the work of a historic epoch, not of a year or even of a decade. "All" that can be accomplished within a generation is to make the maximum structural transformations that will begin to bring the revolutionary socioeconomic changes of these times under the control of the people themselves. In the context of the present analysis, nothing more than – and nothing less than – the creation of a progressive social structure of accumulation is on the agenda of the future.

If that project succeeds, there will still be failures along the way; and even the gains will be ambiguous because the powers that be will often co-opt the best of socialist ideas and put them to antisocialist uses. But if the means of implementing the socialist vision – markets and cooperatives, decentralization and workers' control – are light-years removed from Kautsky's factory society, the vision itself is two centuries old and audaciously new: that the inexorable socialization of the entire planet, which is the future contained in our present, can become the tool, rather than the oppressor, of free women and men.

If socialism can learn from its own past about how to create the future, then there is hope for freedom, solidarity and justice

But I insist that the political, social, and economic development of modern society points socialism toward an ethical, multiclass, and decentralized conception of its goal based on the democratization of the work-place and the creation of new forms of community, both within the nation and throughout the world. That vision has a remarkable continuity with the basic republican values that derive from both the French and the American revolutions. It will not, of course, simply happen and it runs counter to some of the most profound currents of the age, against the elitist tendencies of the knowledge economy and the privitized conformism of mass society. It therefore requires new structures – the democratization of information and education, the vesting of real power in decentralized institutions that give the citizen a pragmatic reason for participation.

Is such a socialist republicanism possible? Can we really create a space for personal and community freedom in a modern society? No one can be sure. All we can say with confidence is that if such freedom is to come into existence, it will be the result of new global structures of solidarity and justice. Which is to say, of socialism...

I write at the end of a right-wing era that resulted from the crisis of the Keynesian welfare state – and on the eve of a new move toward the Left in the West, and perhaps in the Communist East and the Third world. That means that many people, still under the spell of the recent past, will find my futurism quixotic because it is so much at odds with the age of Reagan and Thatcher and Kohl. But it should be remembered that these conservatives proved once again that their ideology is a contradiction in terms. It provides eighteenth-century rationales for twenty-first-century authoritarianism, myths of the invisible hand that justify the elitist maneuvers of the visible hand, idylls of the organic community that facilitate the growth of mass society and create both a new poverty and a vacuous hedonism.

And socialism? More than a hundred years ago, it understood the basic tendency of capitalist society, that drive toward an unsocial socialization. And it counterposed a vision of democratic socialization, one that has in fact inspired almost every gain in human freedom in modern times. But when socialism tried to implement that concept of a new civilization that went beyond simple reform, it was sometimes disastrously wrong or else vague and merely rhetorical. The question is: Can socialism learn from the defeats and betrayals that resulted from its flawed understanding of its own profound truths?

If not, socialism will turn out to have been humankind's most noble and useful political illusion, and its demise may well be followed by a scientifically organized unfreedom. But if it can learn from its own past about how to create the future, then there is hope for freedom, solidarity, and justice. And perhaps there will be a visionary gradualism equal to the challenge of the "slow apocalypse" in which we live.

Of ladies' boots and ministries

Tatiana Ivanova

Instead of celebrating Women's Day once a year, we should better make life worth living for our women every day of the year. This will make our male members of parliament well-tempered and our capital goods industry efficient, as we know from other countries' experience...

How many boots have I worn out in my lifetime? This question is not as difficult to answer as it seems to be. Until the age of twenty or so I, like most of my female compatriots, wore high rubber galoshes. In winter, I used them as overshoes. The high rubber galoshes flapped against my calves as I walked, hurting them and leaving them bruised. When summer came, I could see all around me girls with their legs – slender, long, bandy or plump – bearing ugly black and blue marks.

In the sixties, our first leather boots arrived from abroad.

I worked for a youth paper, and bought British-made winter boots for my mother and myself at an "exclusive" sale arranged right at the editorial office.

We wore them for a decade.

In the meantime, our factories finally launched the commercial production of ladies' boots which were truly multi-purpose. You could use them as water pails, as hammers, or as a deadly weapon if, in the heat of a battle, you suddenly ran out of machine-gun ammunition, or if your hand grenade's safety pin jammed, or your bayonet got blunted.

We were after foreign-made boots of course, but could only dream of "capitalist" ones. Yugoslavian boots were regarded as the "most foreign" ones, followed by East German, Hungarian and Polish, in that order. I sported a Yugoslavian, "most foreign," pair.

They also took a decade to wear out.

My next pair of boots, of Bulgarian provenance, lasted me five years. Since then I've been wearing Austrian boots. I wear them extremely sparingly. I hope to God they won't fall apart too soon...

Our dear men in high places, Ministers and top executives, I have written this piece about the boots by way of congratulations this Women's Day.

Valentin Sergeyevich Pavlov tells us that we must promote the development of our capital goods industry in every way, because it is a highly developed capital goods industry which will finally clothe and shoe us in the long run... I wonder how many men and women have sacrificed the best years of their lives to that insatiable Moloch, capital goods the industry? As far as our family is concerned, my great-grandmother, my grandmother, my mother and myself have... What do we have to show for our efforts? Was it to gratify Saddam Hussein's criminal ambitions that I wore the same pair of boots for a decade? As a matter of fact, even the SCUDs fail to take off, and if they do, they fail to fly, and if they fly, they do so in the wrong direction, and if they reach their targets they do not explode...

In the Persian Gulf, our engineering (instrument-making or whatever they call our munitions industry) has shown, for all the world to see, what it can do. Could anyone in his right mind expect it to perform any better? In our society, it is only the hoary veterans who still believe that "our tanks are strong and fast," to quote a once popular song. The military admit that our army is a microcosm of our society. One needn't be a Solomon to guess that the situation in our munitions industry is not much different from that in our civilian industry. It's no use trying to convince me that the screws are turned, not hammered in, there; that the munitions industry workers do not steal from their plants; that, when hung over, they do not fit components in the wrong places; that our munitions plants are fitted out with hi-tech equipment... Judging by our army officers' appearance, faces and speech, Soviet-made weapons are as modern, efficient and convenient to handle as our boots, handbags and hats are stylish, as our saucepans and cups are graceful, and as our computers are miniature.

We haven't got anything. Neither boots, nor pants, nor meat; neither consumer goods, nor capital goods. Nothing.

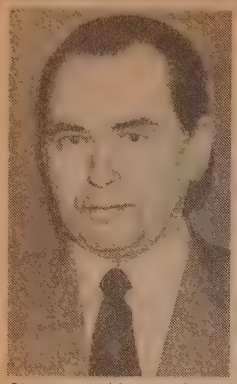
What's more, we are not ever going to have anything, although I know one way of putting an end to all our shortages. I shall tell you, our men in high places, how to do accomplish that. I know that my recommendations will fall on deaf ears, but I shall offer them to you nevertheless.

A little girl should play with a beautiful doll. The doll should possess a full wardrobe, tea-things, furniture, and baby dolls... A teenage girl should have a jewel-box full of necklaces, brooches, rings, bracelets. And a wardrobe full of dresses. A young woman should take off one beautiful garment after another (do any of our men in high places still remember how it feels watching a woman do that?), have her beautiful teeth treated by gentle dentists, give birth to her much-wanted baby in a clean and comfortable maternity home, push her pram along beautiful streets, feast her eyes on rich shop-window displays, select the brightest-coloured dress out of a hundred for her little daughter, the most elegant shirt for her husband, and the cosiest slippers for her mother-in-law.

We know from other countries' experience that instead of celebrating Women's Day once a year, it pays to give our women the kind of life I have just described. As a result, our male MPs will be friendlier, our capital goods industry will prosper, and even our missiles will fly and hit their targets, if necessary.

However, our statesmen are again leading us down a "special" path. There are neither pants, nor bras on sale. But instead of having the State Planning Committee and the State Committee for Material and Technical Supply do something about it in a hurry (after all, few men and women will venture out pantless, especially on a cold winter day), our Prime Minister is going to set up a Ministry of Women... As if we haven't got enough elegantly-clad and marcel-waved beauties from the Soviet Women's Committee whose only aim in life seems to be to show off their prosperity. Now we shall have another Ministry thrust upon us. How will it share with the Women's Committee the hard currency fund from which trips abroad are financed? We already have a Chidren's Fund named after Lenin and popularly known as the Poor Kids Ministry. It hasn't made our children any happier.

In 1991, holidays feel more like melancholy occasions...



Sixty-year-old **Ojars Mezciens** has been appointed "the first Latvian Trade Representative abroad," that is in Moscow. His main task in this post he sees in promoting economic ties between Latvia, the Soviet republics and foreign companies, which so far have more representatives in Moscow than in Riga. In this way, the Latvian Trade Representative believes, he will be able to pave the road to his republic's entry into the world market as an economically independent state.

Upon graduation from the Leningrad Institute of Railway Engineers, Ojars Mezciens worked for several years as an engineer and at the Riga street car-and-trolleybus trust. He then received a job at the Riga office of the foreign trade association Soyuzvneshtrans, where he began working in the letters department and was finally appointed deputy director. For three years he worked with an Iranian postal delivery firm. He spent four years in Cologne with a German delivery company, where he was in charge of organizing, checking and servicing Soviet cargo transportation. He refused to take the post of the director of the Riga office, because he considered it too boring and monotonous.

So far the trade mission has neither computers nor telefax or staff. But Mezciens believes that all this will appear in the very near future. And Mr. Trade Representative looks with optimism into the future. He believes that the improvement of the country's economy is just a matter of time. In his opinion, the criterium of his usefulness will be reflected in the trade turnover of Latvia, estimated in hard currency, rather than in rubles. He would like to see his republic an equal and sovereign partner of Russia and the future Union, but not a member of that Union.

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"The newly founded Moscow International Translators' School has no analogues anywhere else in the world," says its director, **Leonora Chernyakhovskaya,** a member of the National Association of Scientific and Technical Translators. "Apart from teaching professional translators in various fields, our school will be the only educational institution training teachers of translation."

For 26 years now Leonora Chernyakhovskaya has been working in the department of theory and history of translation of Moscow's Maurice Thorez State Institute of Foreign Languages. In 1983 she received a doctorate in the theory and history of translation. She has published a great number of scientific papers. When in 1986 she became a professor she felt that "it was impossible to achieve anything more in the government system of education..."

In 1989 Chernyakhovskaya set up a translators' bureau at the cooperative Contour, and some time later decided to take up publishing. The financial success of the Ariadna Cooperative Publishing House and the assistance of the joint venture Lesinvest allowed Leonora to establish a minor enterprise this year – a private translators' school.

"The government system has done everything it could to spoil the national school of translation, "Chernyakhovskaya says. "As a result, old traditions die, there's a constant brain drain and the professional level of our translators is deteriorating. Our goal is to change this situation."

The school will operate on tuition fees and personal contributions. The first lessons will take place aboard a specially equipped boat cruising up and down the Volga.

D.Polikarpov

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The works of 37-year-old Armenian artist **Ashot Isakov** are for the first time ever being exhibited at the House of Journalists in Yerevan. On display are 60 water-colors on wood, drawings and etchings.

As a boy of eleven he got into an accident and as a result lost both hands. He held many occupations, worked as a shepherd and a watchman. What else can an invalid do in our country? Ashot learned to paint.

It was not his idea to display his works. He never expected that his works could be exhibited although experts thought highly of them, especially his graphic works. The exhibition was organized by his fellow-artists. And it was sponsored by the Armenian commercial bank, the Gtutyun charity organization and the Vaspurakan society.

Apart from drawing and painting, Ashot likes to

The procurator passes sentence

Forty-four-year-old **Svetlana Goryacheva,** Deputy Chairman of Russia's Supreme Soviet, has left the shadow of Boris Yeltsin and found herself in the center of political passions. Goryacheva made a statement at the session, in which she expressed a lack of confidence in the head of Russian parliament and accused him of undermining the Union and Russia. Yeltsin's allies regarded this statement as a "stab in the back." The staff of the Primorye TV and Radio Committee in Vladivostok, who nominated Goryacheva a year ago, described her political statement as "an act of betraying Russia's interests and a crude offence to the honor and dignity of the committee staff," and her attitude towards her boss as "the height of hypocricy, double-dealing and cynicism" and began a campaign to remove her.

Prior to her election to her present post, Goryacheva worked as a procurator at the Primorye inter-district Procurator's Office in charge of environmental protection. Though at the First Congress of Russia's Deputies she said that she would like to see Russia "a strong, sovereign state within the Union," she voted against Russia's sovereignty and for signing a new Union Treaty. She spoke out against "combining" government posts and party appointments, for a temporary suspension of party and public organizations membership for judges and procurators during their term of office. However, she believes it inexpedient to abolish the party-and-political bodies in the armed forces.

Last summer she said that although she "not always shared" Yeltsin's views she was ready to "do her best to help him," since she believed that Boris Yeltsin "should have a very close-knit crew." A member of the Communist Party, Goryacheva does not belong to any parliamentary bloc.

swim. He drives a car and goes mountain-climbing. That's how he and his family spend their leisure time.

* * *

Member of the Soviet swimming team, bronze medalist at the Montreal Olympic Games, 34-year-old **Arvydas Juozaitis,** has surprised his republic twice. The first time was in April 1988, when at a meeting of the discussion club at the republican Union of Artists, he gave a report on Lithuania's political culture which was immediately printed in the underground press and distributed all over Vilnius, resulting in electing Juozaitis to the Sajudis initiative group. The second time was when Juozaitis, one of the founders of Sajudis and member of the council of the newly elected Sejm, refused to take part in the republican parliamentary elections, which promised him unquestionable victory and a deputy's mandate, and began criticizing his recent allies as sharply as he used to criticize the Communist Party elite.

A graduate of the Economic Department of Vilnius University Juozaitis, like all professional athletes was given post-graduate work, taught in the Department of Marxist-Leninist Philosophy, and having received the degree of a candidate of science, went to work at the Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Law of the USSR Academy of Sciences, where he conducted research into the Lithuanian Renaissance of the XVIth century.

Juozaitis, who is a confirmed Catholic, has never belonged to any party and supports liberal democracy.

"A civilized national state is not only a national state." Juozaitis says. "Humane goals cannot be achieved just by any means. If we create an independent, but totalitarian Lithuania, we'll destroy it." However, he believes that "Lithuania is not an oasis of democratic traditions. "Unfortunately Lithuania is not alone.

Juozaitis did not believe that the Lithuanian government should consist only of members of Sajudis and was right when he warned that Moscow would not ignore the policy of Vilnius.

* * *

All through the Holy Week and Easter of last year his Grace Bishop **Basil** (Rodzianko) of the Orthodox Church in America served in Moscow, at the grave of Patriarch Tikhon in the Monastery of the Don Icon of the Mother of God. "Just a few years ago," says the Bishop, "I wouldn't even have dreamt of that." At the age of four he was forced, to emigrate together with his family. His grandfather Mikhail Rodzianko, the Chairman of the State Duma said at that time: "Don't worry. This situation will not last. We are only leaving for a couple of months."

"So you see," laughs the Bishop, "during those 'two months' I managed to grow up, get old, in a word – live a whole life."

The Bishop's current visit to this country is a peace-making mission to the Ukraine, an attempt to improve relations between the Orthodox Church and the Uniates. The Bishop has fulfilled another important task: at the request of the Patriarchate he recorded for the Mosccow TV channel 25 sermons, which TV viewers will shortly see. Asked whether the present almost overall passion for religion in this country is another tribute to fashion, the Bishop answered:

"What would you expect after the past seventy years? However, I know that there are some very religious people in Russia. They have returned their faith through much suffering. Perhaps they are few, but they are true believers".

For many years now Bishop Basil has headed the Holy Archangels Orthodox Christian Broadcasting Center in Washington and he addresses his listeners in that beautiful Russian language which we have almost completely forgotten.

"Psychiatry" versus dissidents

The authorities of the local psychiatric asylum in Ukhta (the republic of Komi) have brought legal action against *Dmitry Alexeyev*, a 23-year-old student of Leningrad University and correspondent of the newspaper *Ukhta*. Although he joined the newspaper only recently, Dmitry and his collegue from the regional newspaper *Molodyozh Severa* (The Youth of the North) Andrei Pavlov have become notorious for their articles about repression in the years of stagnation and during perestroika. Alexeyev claims that the instrument of repression was psychiatry.

"It began last year," Dmitry says. "A man called me and said: 'Please, help me! They want to put me into a psychiatric ward!' The man who was asking for help was literally hunted for. Several times they tried to hospitalize him, not on medical grounds, but with the help of militia. Although according to a medical examination done in Moscow the 27-year-old scientist, who has the degree of a Candidate of Science, has no mental disturbances and has never had any. Then why did they persecute him? Most probably because he was connected with a Judaic community in Moscow.

When in November 1990 Dmitry published an article about the role of psychiatry in persecuting dissidents *Ukhta* received quite a few letters in which people told about reprisals against dissidents.

The author of one of the letters, **Elza Skvortsova** from *Ukhta*, used to be a building engineer and a teacher. For more than three years she was persecuted by psychiatrists because of a letter she sent to the newspaper *Pravda*. At present Elza set up a society of social defence of people persecuted for their criticism of the authorities. The Society is located in one of the former centres of the GULAG system of concentration camps. Her archive includes many documents about people illegally dismissed and those who had to leave the country for political reasons. And now she may have to help Dmitry Alexeyev.

As for the journalist he is not too upset because of the action started against him. "I'm glad," he says, "that I'll get a chance to tell the public about the state of things."

Ye. Gorbunova

Good-bye to the "special" archives

Anatoly PROKOPENKO, former director of Special Archives in which the Katyn documents were uncovered speaks about the motives behind his resignation and about those who keep us from finding out about our own history.

New Times: Why have you left the Archives to which you devoted so much of your energy?

Anatoly Prokopenko: This was a very difficult step for me to take. But I consider myself primarily a researcher who must strive towards scientific and historical truth, rather than a functionary who acts according to the principle: "not allowed." I could not continue discharging my duties in the Archives...

N.T. You're holding back something... As far as I know your aid to historians in the Katyn affair as from your publications, among them those published in *New Times*, your appeal for greater openness provoked the anger of the leaders of Administration of the Main Archives.

A.P. That's true, but this was the last straw. What I mean is not merely my personal principles but the fate of the Central State Special Archives. It may be recalled that it is the historical archives consisting of captured German collections and that of the former Main Administration for POWs and Interned Persons (MAPIP – herein after referred to as Main Administration) of the NKVD–MVD of the USSR. It contained 4.7 million records from the 14th century to the year 1960, interconnected with card indexes, systematic catalogues and special subjects. The captured files, reports of German informers, diplomats, travellers, military analysts give vast information on Russia and the USSR, about which even the leaders of our state knew nothing.

For many years now senior officials of the Main Archives Administration of the USSR and the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs have been thinking about all sorts of reorganizations of Special Archives: now about the transfer of the Main Administration's records to the Archives of the Soviet Army, now about their return to the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs. Many documents were being roughly torn out of the collection and were transferred, allegedly being part of special collections to other archives, departments and republics. All this was done by the decision of extremely ignorant people...

N.T. The Archives of the Main Administration arouse the particular anxiety of those who are still dissatisfied with the Katyn disclosures, despute the documents and the guilt of the Soviet side. Have there been any attempts to destroy them?

A.P. Yes, I am concerned about the fate of such collections. Jointly with the KGB and MVD, I tried hard to set up a commission of experts to examine the documents of this collection in order to declassify it officially. Now I regret having taken this initiative for not being sure that the most valuable part of the collection won't be removed on various pretexts...

When I learned from the first issue of *Stolitsa* magazine that the KGB was destroying or has already destroyed documents on the dissident movement, I caught myself again at the thought that unless there is a Law on archives in this country, the KGB and archives are incompatible in a law-governed state. The KGB is always keeping back something about its funds and is guided by "special considerations" as to what can be shown to historians and what cannot.

The veterans of Special Archives remember the time of Beria in the 1960s and immediately after it, when sturdily-built fellows used to come to the Archives and after such visits the collections became empty. In the 1960s, documents about V.I. Lenin's relatives on his mother's side were removed from the Central State Archives of the October Revolution. So, it is difficult for me to guess which of the Main Administration's documents the KGB–MVD commission will classify as "officially secret".

N.T. I understand your reasons, but perhaps Special Archives have really in their stocks something considered to be a state secret? After all, its name – Special is no mere chance...

A.P. Nobody can prove to me that information about not so good moral make-up of the Main Administration's guard is a secret. Prisoners of war have written long ago books about the people who looked after them and how. Is it a secret that POWs were trained to be anti-fascists? Or secret service men?.. I think it would be only useful to Soviet people to know about the surprisingly profound judgements of Polish officers regarding Soviet reality, and the reaction of German officers to the Nuremberg Trial, to the speech of Winston Churchill in Fulton, to Stalin's public appearances...

N.T. I have heard more than once that it is impossible to give access to old documents because everyone will rush to find out who betrayed whom at one time, who informed against whom, and this will spark off a wave of hatred in the country!..

A.P. No, it won't. All this was very long ago... True, I judge by myself. Having "abused" my official position, in 1985 I went through the secret documents of the USSR Supreme Court on the rehabilitation of those framed up in the 1930s. I was interested in the fate of my grandfather Kozyrev Grigory Alexeyevich, former station-master in Semichnaya, between Tsaritsyn and Rostov. His former colleagues Samsonov, Bykov and Podolsky betrayed him. What was the essence of their denunciations: grandfather feared that the war industry of Germany, developing from year to year, threatened our country. So, he had to be punished for "defeatist sentiments." Grandfather expressed regret about the execution of Pyatakov (he was Lenin's associate, after all). For this he was accused of solidarity with members of the opposition. Finally, my grandfather was distressed because the endless meetings on the forthcoming elections to the USSR Supreme Soviet were distracting people from work. For this he got article 58: ten years of penal servitude and an unknown common grave somewhere near Belebey in Bashkiria. When my mother learned about all this she only threw up her hands and said "They were said to be the best friends of my father!"

But malice and hatred do not exist any more...

N.T. What do you call the new post you occupy?

A.P. Vice-Chairman of the Committee for Archives under the RSFSR Council of Ministers. And in this capacity I hope to deal again with Special Archives because the question on the transfer of some central historical state archives of the USSR to Russia is being decided now.

As a matter of fact it is necessary to radically change the control of archives in the USSR. The roles played by the Union and republican organizations, maybe except the future Central State Archives of the All-Union bodies, must be altered. To my mind, the remaining archives must organizationally and financially be subordinated to the State bodies on whose territory they are situated. On the whole, the division of archives as to their importance into the Union, republican and municipal is conventional and, to a large extent, farfetched. For example, the Kostroma or Yaroslavl regional archives contain docu-

ments with information of local, republican, All-Union and sometimes even of world importance. The apprehensions that without the Central administration body the interests of republican archivists will be infringed, that it will become more difficult for them to get information "on a particular nationality" in Russian archives are groundless. Horizontal agreements are the best guarantee of fruitful contacts.

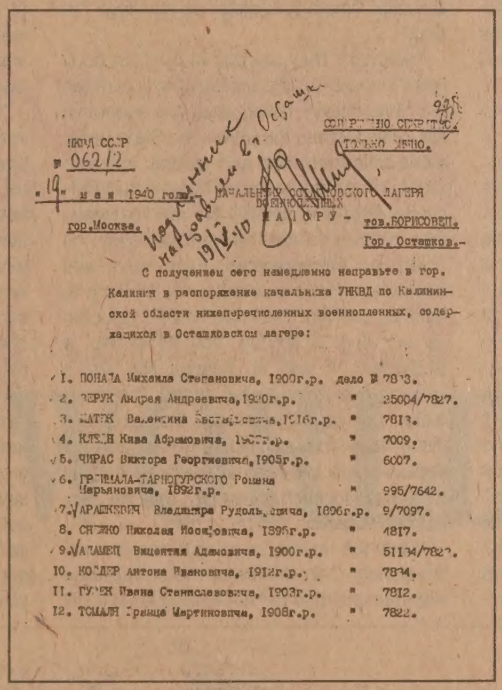
N.T. So, you are optimistic about Special Archives being transferred to Russia...

A.P. They contain unique collections from Russian emigres and about Russian emigration. I think that nobody has looked so far into the stocks of the amalgamated Russian trade unions, the Russian league, the party of Little Russians, Mason leagues, such as "the great light of the North", "Lotus", "Astrea". There you'll also find the secret instruction of the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party to the foreign League of social-democrats about the Second congress of the RSDLP, the letter of Mark Mrachny on behalf of the committee for the protection of arrested revolutionaries of Russia, the letters to Boris Savinkov from his aide-de-camp F. Klepikov. This is how Klepikov planned to take vengeance on the Czech corps in Siberia for its brutalities: "If I ever come to be at the head of the air force in a future sovereign Russia, without letting anyone know, under the guise of grand manoeuvres involving thousands of bombers, I shall order an air raid of Prague showering it with bombs and incendiary shells to turn absolutely everything into a heap of ruins..."

A. Potresov, one of the founders of Russian social-democracy, wrote in March 1918: "And this national task – to make poverty-stricken and backward Russia rich! ...Is it to be achieved by itroducing socialism? But even many Bolsheviks come to realize that such a venture is a good-for-nothing Utopia in our cruel era. It is splendidly documented by the fiasco of Bolshevism... It is necessary to regulate the economy with capitalist methods". Now about Karl Marx: "Marx is Chatsky against his will in Russia's 'Wit Works Woe,' but Chatsky going through a much more serious drama than the one staged for us by Griboyedov. In order to understand Marx, contemporary to Russia, Marx to whom Penza and Saratov put up monuments we must fancy, at least for a moment, what would happen if Famusov, Molchalin, Zagoretsky, Skalozub, all of the illustrious gathering would all of a sudden take it into their head not to turn out Chatsky, not to pronounce him crazy but, on the contrary, would wish to press him to their bosom, recognize him the ruling dominant influence and start all together "popularizing" him.

Even if Special Archives, for some unknown reasons, are not destined to be transferred to the Russian Federation, it is necessary to copy the part of it relating to Russia – both pre-revolutionary and Soviet. Meanwhile, the Main Archives Adminsitration is more than indifferent to the fate of the documents. The transfer of captured archive documents may start soon in the Federal Republic of Germany in keeping with the Soviet-German Treaty of good-neighbourly relations, partnership and cooperation. Whereas today only 10 percent of them have been copied. It may be recalled that the archivists of the FRG have voiced their readiness to exchange the Tallinn archives for those of Hanseatic cities only after each and every page is copied...

N.T. What do you intend to do as a staff member of Russia's committee for archives?



НКВД СССР
№ 06212
«19» мая 1940 года.
НАЧАЛЬНИКУ ОСТАШКОВСКОГО ЛАГЕРЯ ВОЕННОПЛЕННЫХ
МАЙОРУ – тов. БОРИСОВУ.
гор. Москва. Гор. Осташков.

С получением сего немедленно направьте в гор. Калинин в распоряжение начальника УНКВД по Калининской области нижеперечисленных военнопленных, содержащихся в Осташковском лагере:

1. ПОНАГА Михаила Степановича, 1900г.р. дело № 7813.
2. ЧЕРУК Андрея Андреевича, 1900г.р. " 25004/7827.
3. КАТРЖ Валентина Евстафьевича, 1916г.р. " 7813.
4. КЛЕЙН Нива Абрамовича, 1[illegible]г.р. " 7009.
5. ЧИРАС Виктора Георгиевича, 1905г.р. " 6007.
6. ГРЕВИЦА-ГАРНЕЦУРСКОГО Романа Иеронимовича, 1892г.р. " 995/7642.
7. ЧАРАНЕВИЧ Владимира Рудольфовича, 1896г.р. 9/7097.
8. СНЕЖКО Николая Иосифовича, 1896г.р. " 1817.
9. ЧАПАЕВ Вацентия Адамовича, 1900г.р. " 51134/7827.
10. КОЛДЕР Антона Ивановича, 1912г.р. " 7834.
11. ГУРЕЕ Ивана Станиславовича, 1903г.р. " 7812.
12. ТОМАЛЯ Франца Мартиновича, 1908г.р. " 7822.

One of the documents turned over by M. Gorbachev to W. Jaruzelski

A.P. So far most archives of Russia are in an information slumber. By joining the efforts of historians and archivists from Smolensk to Kamchatka, from Archangelsk to Rostov I would like to make a programme of publishing retrospective documents. I assure you that books on collectivization, industrialization, cultural development, even their former unbearably vapid titles, will become bestsellers and yield the publishers high profits if documentary truth is introduced into them... Meanwhile, the phenomenon we call perestroika is already six years old, but despite this no purposeful work is being done to publish documents which depict truthfully the country's life from the 1920s to 1980s, and are unknown to our people to this day...

N.T. Do you believe the new structures will be able to change something quickly?

A.P. After all, in less than a year N.G. Markin, Secretary of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, managed in 1917-1918 to arrange, on Lenin's instructions, the publication of the secret documents of the tsarist and provisional governments!

N.T. It is quite natural that many people are looking forward to learning the truth about repression, about such tragic pages of our history, as collectivization, the migration of peoples... But it is obvious that we can learn not only political, but also economic lessons from the past?

A.P. Certainly! Documents of All-Russian archives will help draw up a modern land cadastre, so important in the market economy for most diverse appraisal in land tenure. State archives contain a vast factual material on problems of cooperatives.

N.T. In the last interview to our magazine you spoke of the commercial aspects of work in archives. Are you going to sell valuable documents?

A.P. Let's put it this way – I stand for commercial activity, naturally not to the detriment of research. Russian archives need money and hard currency to buy computers, duplicating machines and other equipment. Then why can't we set up in the new committee a central bureau of genealogy (as it was done in Holland) where it would be possible to concentrate biographical information from all archives of Russia – on Soviet and foreign citizens? And after that provide information about family trees...

N.T. What do you consider to be your greatest achievement in your recent work at Special Archives?

A.P. I am happy to have succeeded at my own responsibility in lifting, at least a little, the veil of secrecy from archives and by means of their documents to bring to hundreds of thousands of people in many countries the bitter truth about their kith and kin who perished in World War II. I could not do all that I had planned but I fulfilled the promise to the Japanese people to provide them with information about tens of thousands of their soldiers from the former Kwangtung army who died in Soviet captivity. The lists indicating the sites where nearly 38,000 japanese are buried, and this involves 31 regions of the country, are ready. The USSR President may turn them over to the Japanese side during his visit in April. It is essential that once in Japan these documents not be hidden in official archives and that fall into the hands of such selfless people as R. Saito, President of the Association of Siberian POWs.

The only apprehension is that the fate of POWs should not become a small change in some political disputes between Soviet and Japanese diplomats...

Interviewed by
Lev Yelin

Ours are coming!

The entire country is in Moscow's Central Manezh Square today. Who's speaking?

"Get ready to repel an attack from all quarters! No renunciation of principles! Nowhere to retreat with only developed socialism behind. Stick to our guns to the last bullet, the last democrat, the last conservative!.. Perestroika is our last trench; it is high time to climb out. Let's abolish in four years the results of the five years of perestroika! Who thirsts for power? People, be vigilant! Everyone not with us is against us. There, an unhealthy shadow flitted by. Not ours? Or ours? The Reds? Or the Whites? No, red white and blue, red blue and yellow, red, yellow and green. Wow, what a muddle! Pluralism, the devil restructure it! Never mind, we'll soon be putting the fist to all their faces, reformers, conservatives, middle-of-the-roaders, secessionists or internationalists. And vegetarians? Why, they'll also get it in the neck, because we want more cereals and vegetables for ourselves. That's democracy for you! Or rather law and order."

"Tanks! What, bringing back real socialism? But why blue stars? Americans? We barely got them off Saddam's neck and now they're here. Help! Restoring capitalism! What, not doing that for the time being? Don't want to be bothered? What a pity. Why, that's James Bond with Major Pronin bringing humanitarian aid to perestroika's starving. Hip, hip! Where to register as starving? I'm first!"

"Heard it? They say that of April 1st bony meat'll cost a C., and average pay'll be three C's. Everything's falling apart, the economy, the Lenin Library, the Union, the State Bank, along both horizontal and vertical, and also GUM, TSUM and even the Turkish-built Petrovsky shopping arcade. No raw materials. Also nothing to eat, no hard currency, no scrap, no entrepreneurs. Even spivs and head managers are petering out. Nothing to feed the cat with. You know what? It gobbled up our dog. A lapdog, you think? No, a St.Bernard, it was so hungry. But who's causing everything to fall apart? The reformers, they say. Or perhaps the conservatives. Then there are middle-of-the-roaders, secessionists and internationalists. What, all together? No, each separately; they say they just can't agree."

"So of the 1st they're going to sack the entire bunch. Only drivers of motor caravans with humanitarian aid and their guards'll still be working, drawing pay according to the Soyuzpechat rates of 50 percent off each parcel. What, the rest? Well, when they enact that law on entry and exit, all of us'll be evacuated, while our country'll be sold for 500 billion dollars and remade international "20th Century Dinosaurium" Game park. The dollars will be spent to purchase sausage. Don't know where they're going to evacuate us? Either to the selva around the Amazon or the neo jungles. What, despite Point five? From now on we'll all have one point five, that of Soviet man. Why not to America? What won't let us in? Though they said the cold war was over. The people have been duped! Betrayed!"

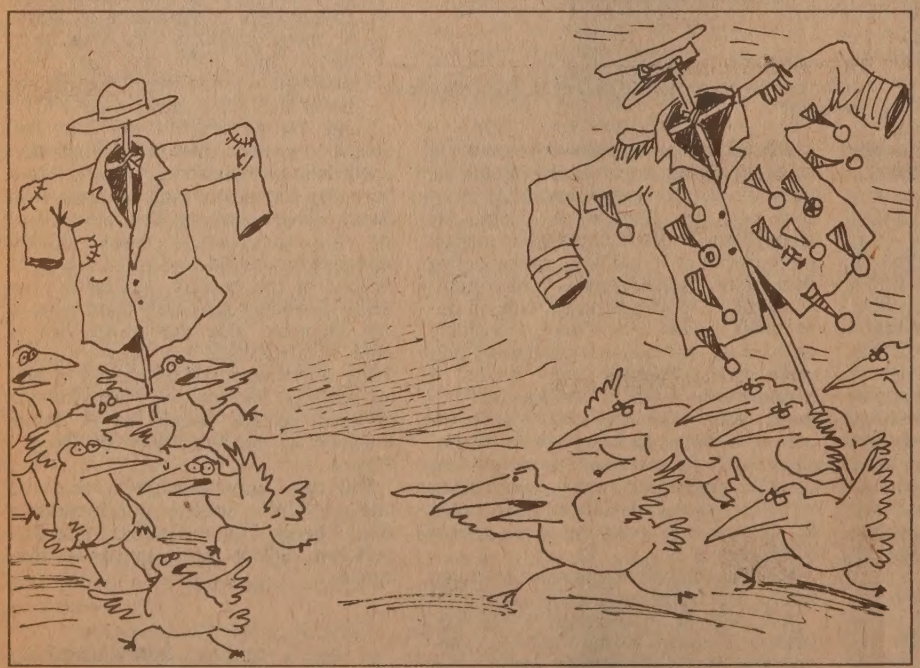
"Only the force that started this entire song-and-dance can save us. I put to you in straightforward Russian that Kuzmich'll save us. Hi, folks! Our armour's strong and our tanks are fast, and there'll be a bit of what to take with drink on the top. Brothers and sisters, fathers and children, For Christ's sake keep your cool. Only the Committee of Safety can save us! Of national safety? No, not the one from the Slaviansky Bazar but the Committee of Public Safety, the one operating underground at the Sovietsky restaurant. Hip, hip! All power to the Soviets! May the Supreme Soviet give you its love. As for sex and eroticism, there are certain advances to be seen. The only trouble is that the Centre can't get Old Mother Russia to give way despite all its hugs and caresses. True, I'm afraid they'll get her down at long last. Cherish love and as years pass, still more so. Friends, our Union is fine! And so is the group of deputies, espeically the three Paladins Ilya Alksnis, Dobrinya Petrushenko and Alyosha Kogan. Don't let the republics escape the Union!"

"What, keep your money in the savings bank. There aren't any imbeciles around. But didn't Gosteleradio say we're all idiots? What, Kravchenko himself revealed that state secret? No, that was Petrosian. Why can Petrosian do that, not Kravchenko? Well he's one of those funny ones. Yes, that overweening press keeps tossing things our way. It's high time to start the roundup, firstly of the most vociferous, especially all going about it with a spark in their eye."

"I'm cool, absolutely cool. Don't worry! Be happy! Be like a bull in a spring meadow. I'm fully fed, absolutely so. And drunk too! Absolutely so! About to burst into song, 'cause life is good and it's good to live..."

The country's all agog in this unforgettable year of 1991.

Evgeny Rusakov



Drawing by Victor Bogorad

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